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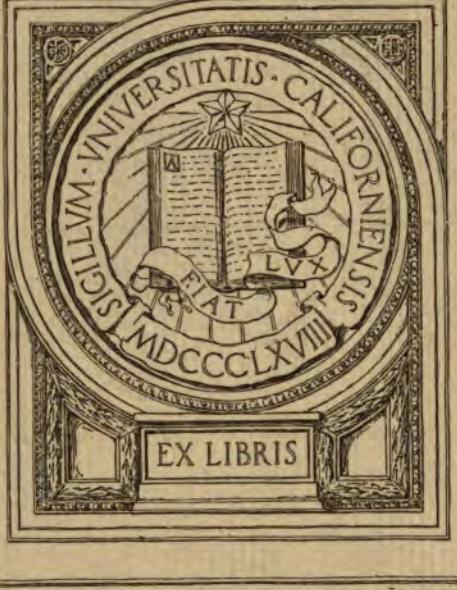

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"Why Callest Thou Me Good?"

By

Robert Whitaker

Presented by
The Author

Nov. 30, 1915

Robt Whitaker

"Why Callest Thou Me Good?"

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By

Robert Whitaker

Author of
"My Country and Other Verse," "The Gospel at Work in Modern Life," "The Wickedness of Doing Nothing," "One Woman's Worth," etc.

PUBLISHED BY THE
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BY WAY OF EXPLANATION.

The following chapters were published as a serial in The San Francisco Bulletin, in September, 1913, under the title, "The Confessions of a Clergyman." The title given here is that chosen by the author himself. The Bulletin had published previously "The Confessions of Abraham Ruef," "My Life in Prison," by Donald Lowrie; "The Story of Alice Smith" and "The Healing of Sam Leake."

Because many have asked for these chapters in more connected form they are given here. The text is substantially the same as that which appeared in The Bulletin.

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CHAPTER I.

The Shriving of the Good.

All my life I have been counted good.

I was reckoned a good boy at home. My credits were always high for good conduct in school. I had to an unusual degree the moral confidence of my bench-mates during my four years of factory life. During the first two decades of my life in the ministry I held positions of high responsibility, with never a breath of accusation against me. During the last decade although my opinions have been feared and disliked exceedingly by many whom I formerly counted friends my bitterest enemies in their serious moods have granted me moral standing as high as I could ask. Those who through theological reasoning think that I am a lost soul still continue to call me good.

I am stating the matter thus frankly neither because I propose to contradict the common verdict, nor because I have any sense of glorying in it. This is not to be the confession of a double life. Nor is it the complacent affirmation of a respectable life. I am trying to make clear first of all just what my own experience has been that I may speak out of that experience the most heart-searching convictions to which I have come. I have a confession to make which I think the world needs just as much as it needs the "Prison Life" of Donald Lowrie, the story of "Alice Smith," or the record of "The Healing of 'Sam' Leake." Mine is a more difficult story to tell than theirs. It will possibly find less sympathy in respectable circles generally than their dealing with moral struggle on the plane on which they have lived. One may object to the uncovering of sores in public, even for purposes of healing. But there is the advantage of distinctness when the sores can be seen, and there is a certain satisfaction in merely comparing sores with sores, or congratulating yourself that your own body is free from that sort of thing. Revelations of disease of every kind appeal to something in us all. Call it the morbid if you will, though that is a shallow term. It is to me like the fearful fascination which I felt as a boy the first time I loked over the cliffs at Niagara. Over the edge of the horrible in others we look into the abysses of the possible in ourselves. There is the fascination, and the danger of it.

But we do not need to examine diseases so much as we need to examine health. If doctors studied health more there

would be less disease to study. We do not need to analyze crime as much as we need to scrutinize goodness. If goodness were real crime would soon be a vanishing quantity. The trouble with ministers is not that they do not understand sin; it is that they do not understand virtue. He whom most of our ministers claim as Master was not concerned with the crimes of His day; He was concerned over the goodness of His day. Jesus did not attack the vice of His time, He attacked the virtue of His time. At no point is the common misunderstanding of Him more profound today.

I did not say that doctors needed to admire health more, though what I said will be so understood by many at the first reading. They admire health too much now, that is such health as we have. If they were not so soon satisfied with a superficial physical well-being most diseases would be defeated before they were ever manifested. Neither would I be understood as standing for a minute for that easy moral complacency which is content to approve ordinarily nice and decent living and ignore the doings of the disreputable, except in a coercive, legal way. It is exactly this attitude which I fear and detest. Mere admiration of goodness is the last mood in the world that we need. What I do mean to say is that more than a better understanding of crime, however important that may be, we need a better understanding of what we commonly call morality, and that if we were sound in our thinking about morality there would soon be little need to think about crime. It is because we have not gotten hold of what goodness is that we are trying so hard to understand what evil is. And though there may be large benefit in this, both the world and the church are going at the thing from the wrong end.

The church has always made too much of sin, though in a different way from that in which the misnamed "muck-rakers" of our time have undertaken to save the world. The muck-rakers have dealt with social, the church has dealt more with individual sin. The muck-rakers have handled wrong-doing in the present, and in the concrete; the church has handled evil in its origin, and in its nature more. But both have emphasized and do emphasize rather the negative than the affirmative side of life, and both have failed in the main to see that the real trouble is not with the badness, but with the goodness of men. Jesus saw this and said it, and therefore the "good" people of His day put him to death.

And it is at this very point of judging badness, as I am going to show, that the chief demerit of our goodness appears. The deepest test of virtue is its opinion of vice, or perhaps it

were better to say that the severest test of the virtuous is their attitude toward the vicious. Generally speaking, it is more vicious than vice itself. It is here that the largest justification of our muck-rakers appears. All men who show what a human thing sin is help to humanize the attitude of goodness toward it. They help the good more than they help the bad. And this is the heart of my contention, whether you approve it or not. All that I want just now is that you shall try to understand it. The first great moral need of the world is to help the good, not to help the bad. The story of "Alice Smith" was not chiefly valuable for the hope that it put into the hearts of the underworld. It was chiefly valuable for the humanizing ministry which it wrought in some hearts here and there in the upperworld. I am glad if it spoke with saving power to some publicans, but I rejoice more that it actually punctured the moral epidermis of some Pharisees. And the pity of it is not that some of the underworld mocked it and would not understand it. The greater pity by far is that so many of the good hardened the crust of their goodness lest it should find their hearts also and bring them to see their proprieties and their pieties for the pitiful things which they are.

Therefore is it important that since a woman and a man have both made confession of their badness someone should make confession now for the good. And I repeat that it is harder to confess the good than it is to confess the bad? It is harder to find a confessor. Shall we confess to the bad? And if we confess to the good will they not feel that we are attacking them under guise of shriving ourselves? Besides, what tangible thing is there to confess? Original sin, of course. But the day for mourning that except in the way of theological make-believe is gone. Our every day misadventures of temper and word? Such confession is only superficially satisfying. Yet few of us see any deeper. Whittier was one of the rare souls who understood. You remember that in that fine "swan-song" of his "At Last," he says significantly:

"Suffice it if my good and ill unreckoned,
And BOTH FORGIVEN by Thy abounding grace."

I have always thought that one of the deepest words which Whittier ever wrote. Only lately have I come to see how deep it is. And I am but feeling my way in this confession to that which I know needs to be said so that many more shall think it out for themselves, and understand. I owe the keener appreciation of this truth which has been growing upon me for years to my recent reading of the story of "Alice Smith" and "The Healing of 'Sam' Leake," and the thinking which I have done

with respect to them both. I am going to try to be as frank as they were, though in a different direction. Like them also I have found a way out which I am trying to follow with what strength I can. I shall try not to dogmatize about it, and not to preach overmuch. And if sometimes my language sounds extravagant I am nevertheless writing in all seriousness, and never more so than when I use paradox and hyperbole to awaken if possible the understanding and conscience of the most difficult class in the community to save—the good.

CHAPTER II.

Ministers and Men.

My father used to tell the story of a man in England who prayed after this fashion, to the scandal of some of the staid religious people of his time: "O Lord, bless the bad; Thou hast blessed the good in making them good; now, therefore, bless those who have need of it; bless the bad."

There may have been some satire in the prayer, as there plainly was in the famous retort of Jesus to the Pharisee, "I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Perhaps the man of English story thought to get under the self-complacent comfortableness of the good folks around him by reminding them of the fortune which was already theirs and thus to shame them out of their smug self-absorption.

It is plain enough that Jesus thought the hardest people in the world to get to understand themselves were those who are reckoned good. On them he used the back-stroke of satire and the forward lashing of out-and-out anathema, and to a large extent used them both in vain. He turned to the sinners because the sinners are the most hopeful class in the world.

One remark which father made years ago hurt me considerably at the time. I was already pledged to the ministry, and with his entire approval and consent. He himself was a loyal church member for more than fifty years, and a deacon for a good portion of that time. Although a "Non-Conformist," to use the English term, he had always that high sense of reverence for the church and all its appointments which had been deeply grained in him as a child in the Anglican communion. Moreover, his personal relations with clergymen of every creed were of the most cordial type. Our home during my boyhood days was ever open to the minister, and the best that we had to give was never lacking when the minister sat at our board. And if my father admired a good book much, he was even quicker to discern and to appreciate a good sermon.

Yet this he said, and in no moment of aggravation, nor in any cynical mood. The quietness and deliberateness of the utterance was what gave it for me its sharpest sting.

"If I were looking for the highest type of character," he remarked thoughtfully one day, "I would not look to the ministry for it."

Now I know ministers today very much better than my

father ever knew them; that is, I know them in a far more intimate way. They have been my personal and professional associates for thirty years. I have had more or less direct personal knowledge of many hundreds of them, East, West, North and South, on the home field and the foreign field, and of nearly every communion under the sun. When I hear other people talk of ministers in the glib fashion in which they often do today, I sometimes wonder how many of them they have actually known.

I have not found ministers very different from other men, lawyers or doctors, commercial men or farmers, university professors or—convicts. Indeed, I have found all men very much alike. If I were looking for the highest type of character I would not look for it exclusively or emphatically in any particular place or profession. I have found as fine exhibitions of moral quality in the penitentiary as I have found anywhere, and as poor exhibits in the church and the university. This is not saying that the average of character is as high in prison as it is in pew and pulpit, or in the professor's chair. It is but admitting what a very varied experience and observation of men has taught me: that character is not a monopoly of men of any creed or condition. And the finest flowers of character are sometimes found in the most unlikely places.

I do not agree even with the ordinary impression that women are naturally better than men. Their circumstances are often morally more fortunate, especially as regards the restraining influence of public opinion, but they are not essentially either better or worse than men. If I were looking for the highest type of character I would not have regard to sex. Conventional goodness, negative moral abstinence, may be more common with women than with men. But the conventional verdict as to their superior virtue is either a part of the effervescence of flattery which overflows all ordinary talk about women in respectable circles, or else it is an expression of the common confounding of morality and propriety, the general failure to recognize what goodness really is. Real strength of character is as rare among women as it is among men.

It is rare in the ministry; not rarer, however, I think, than in any other profession. I have found a great deal of fine, thoroughly human quality among ministers. No class suffers more today from caricature than do the clergy. The average minister of fiction is quite fictitious. The ordinary soapbox orator who berates the preacher knows less of the preacher than the preacher knows about him. There is only one class

of people who know ministers better than they know themselves, and they are—ministers' wives. And too often the minister's wife is as pathetically pious in her perspective as he.

The largest lack of the ministry on the moral side is the human quality. There is much of it among themselves. No men are more wholesomely entertaining when quite by themselves than are ministers. Their conversation, with the very rarest exceptions, is clean. Their interchange of personal pleasantries, save for a very occasional "grouch" among them, is kind. They indulge very little in the diction of the dollar, and in either womanlike chatter about clothes or the man-of-the street's braying about bargains. They have more administrative ability within the lines of their training and experience than have most of their fellows who think them lacking in business sense. I have known a few ministers who have turned from the church to commercial life, and an astonishingly large number of them have succeeded to an extraordinary degree.

"If I had a son who was a fool I would make a parson of him," said an English boor to the Rev. Sidney Smith.

"Evidently your father did not think so," was the famous wit's quick and crushing reply.

And I am very sure that no one thinks so of the ministry, who knows ministers for the kind of men they actually are.

The most serious fault of ministers is their religiousness. I did not say their religion. The genuine among them, and most of them at least mean to be genuine, have a saving amount of real religion, which crops out more in some of them when they are swapping stories than it does when they are preaching sermons. The humanness of ministers is nowhere so evident as in their humor. It is when they are serious, or think they are, that many of them are most unreal, and most lacking in profoundly human feeling.

This story was told me years ago, by some sanctimonious sinner of the cloth whose name I am very glad to have forgotten.

A minister had preached a very searching Sunday evening sermon. One man was deeply touched, and almost persuaded He followed the minister out of doors, and on the way home, half in mind to speak to him. As he lingered behind diffidently, he heard the minister telling some funny story, and laughing, and was so disgusted that he turned away, and presumably was —lost.

Now that kind of story will appeal to a good many ministers yet, as it did to me in a sort of condemnatory way once on a time. Yet it comes nearer to telling what is the matter

with the churches than whole volumes of essays on the subject, when it is taken in just the opposite way from that in which it is intended to be taken.

The trouble with ministers is not that they are quite naturally and unaffectedly human after preaching; the trouble is that they are not more so while they are preaching. Piosity is the prime sin of the pulpit, and of all our religious life. Absolutely the rottenest men that I have known in the ministry have been men of the ultra pious type. If ministers could be as genuine in the pulpit as most of them are out of it there would be vastly less of religiousness and vastly more of religion in the world. They are never really of such little use to bad men as when they are trying hardest themselves to seem good.

More humanness, not just more humor, is what the ministry needs. Don't print that more humane-ness, Mr. Compositor, for that isn't what I mean. Most of our humaneness has the camphor smell of charity about it. No; more human-ness, that is it.

Great, big, whole-souled, human Phillips Brooks rode all day with a New Hampshire stage driver, on the outside of the stage. The conversation was not "religious" and Brooks did not give any hint that he was a clergyman. When the ride was done the stage driver gave Brooks a most hearty handshake, and said, "I'm darned glad to have had you along with me today. It seems good to have a chance to talk with a man. I hain't had nothing but women and preachers all summer."

I suspect that story was made up, but there is no doubt that Brooks was human, both when he preached and afterward. He was one of the very rare good men, either in or out of the ministry, whose goodness is not in danger of becoming like Peter's most religious mood, a "stumbling-block and an offense."

CHAPTER III.

The Missionary Mood.

After four years of student "supplying" all up and down New England, during which time I preached in all the New England States except Connecticut, I began my work in the regular ministry, immediately following my ordination, as a missionary in old Mexico.

I have wondered often of late years how much there was of real human interest in the motives which took me to the mission field. Was it an effort to reach the acme of human goodness at a bound? Was it the good opinion of my fellows in the faith which I sought? Was it real concern of any tangible sort for the Mexicans with whom I proposed to make my home and my ministry? Is missionary goodness an exception to the general want of the human quality among the good?

Of this I am quite certain: That my motives were not mercenary. The salary for myself and wife was $1000 a year. This was equal at that time to about $1300 (pesos) in Mexican money. We paid $20 a month for missionary headquarters. We were forced to keep servants, although the cost of such service was shamefully small. There was, of course, considerable company to entertain, and, as the representatives of our church among a foreign and not wholly friendly people we were under the necessity of presenting a respectable appearance. Our stay there lasted but a year, and it was with me on account of the alkali in the water, and the elevation at which we lived, an almost continual battle with sickness, from which I barely escaped with my life. We did not run behind that year, but we did not save anything, and, we lived, as I have always lived, the simple life.

From my own experience and a considerable observation among misionaries I am quite sure that as a class they are neither overpaid nor covetous of commercial reward. They are waited upon more than ministers and ministers' families at home, because their work takes them into regions generally where the "white man's burden" usually includes a good-sized retinue of servants, and where all kinds of labor service is cheap. They are more regularly paid than multitudes of the poorer paid ministry at home, for the ethics of the churches in respect to keeping faith in a financial way with those who

preach the gospel to them are notoriously bad. Many of our home churches are positively indecent when it comes to paying the preacher.

This thing actually happened in California, and not so very far away from San Francisco. A minister of unimpeachable character, and good intellectual ability, was serving a "home mission" church. He had a wife and five children to support. His salary was $800 a year. The salary was paid in the most irregular fashion. His own contribution to the collection box was twenty-five cents a Sunday, which was always paid. One Sunday evening the church treasurer handed him this amount, the total receipts of the day, and without a word of apology but with a whimsical smile, remarked, "Well, Brother Blank, you are sure of this amount anyway." And this was a decidedly orthodox church. Of course, it was an extreme case, but I have known others in all essential particulars just as bad.

The missionary does not have to meet quite this sort of thing, which is one reason, I venture to say, why some of them prefer the foreign field. But as a class they make less of money than the ministry at home, and that's much less than many people suppose. Half our criticism of good people falls flat because it does not go deep enough. The supposed coveteousness of the clergy is generally imaginary, because no one but a fool would go into the ministry for salary. There are exceptions, of course, because there are fools in the ministry as there are everywhere else.

The largest cost of missionary service to the man who undertakes it is the isolation of it. No one can understand just what that is who has not experienced it.

I came across an old Mexican photograph the other day. It was a picture of two young men, one of them my "native assistant" in my early days in Mexico. He was a keen and apparently kind fellow, for whom I confess a good deal of affection to this day, although he played me false. Under cover of my unacquaintance with the language and the city he lived a double life, to the scandal or the amusement of the natives, according to their point of view. I found him out and reported him, as I was compelled to do, to headquarters in Mexico City, where he was immediately recalled. I did not keep the letter which our superintendent wrote me, but I well remember certain words which he wrote. He had been there a considerable number of years. This was what he said:

"If ever an honest Mexican is found they ought to blaze his name in letters of light on the sides of Popocatapetl."

This superintendent was a forceful, energetic, outspoken

man. He was at that time, to all appearances, a thorough-going Protestant. I remember he said to me in his own home when I visited him in Mexico City some months afterward: "Whitaker, I have been a missionary in India among the heathen, and I tell you I would rather try to tell the gospel to the heathen than to these people."

Five years ago I read with more than ordinary surprise that this superintendent had just been received into the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico City.

The explanations offered were many, and not all complimentary to him. Irritation at missionary management was one of them. Another and deeper was desire for some decisive authority and surcease from uncertainties, both in respect to dogma and to deed. Another was his intimacy with men of a strongly influential type. Perhaps all of these things had somewhat to do with it. When I wrote to him he wrote me a great heart message in reply. He had not bettered himself in a material way by the change.

I think myself it was because he was a little more human than most missionaries that his creed gave way. He had lived among the people so long that he had to be one of them. He was heart hungry to identify himself with his fellows. I am not justifying his change. The creed of Catholicism does not appeal to me. I am simply trying to understand him and interpret him. And whether you think of his course as weak or strong, I wish you might think of it with me for a moment quite apart from the theology or ecclesiasticism of the thing which he did. He would have been a more respectable man, I suppose, if he had not changed. Consistency in outward demeanor is a kind of Kohinoor with respectable people. It is vulgar to be vaccilating, you know. But think of him, if you can, as swept on tides of the human into a great sense of sympathy and surrender of fellowship with his kind. He wanted to be more than a missionary, he wanted to be just a man among his fellow men. And if they, the great bulking human mass around him, had been Buddhists, he might have been a Buddhist, too.

There are a lot of good people who will think this shockingly superficial, not because it is, but because goodness for them is so bound up with certain sets of accepted ideas. Some of them go as missionaries primarily because they think their set of ideas is better than the other man's set of ideas. It is a fearful thing to fall away from their set of ideas. The man who does this is a pervert. It is a blessed thing to accept their set of ideas. The man who does this is a convert. Whether

he is human or not they have not thought, because the human for them is not something to be sought after, it is something to be feared

Even the heartache of the missionary's isolation only makes them long the more for the family-bound fellowship of their own intellectual breed. They can not be comfortable outside of their own conventions.

Looking back now I know that I learned more from my servants in Mexico than I learned from anybody else, or than anybody else learned from me. I paid them, man and wife, $9 a month—half of this as wages, half of it for their keep. That was higher than the average wage, which was $5 a month for man and wife, with a few frijoles (beans) and tortillas (corn cakes) on which to live.

It hurt my conscience a little even then. But I felt then, as most missionaries feel, and most respectable people everywhere, for that matter, how beautiful is patronage. I hate the thing now. This is the fundamental immorality of all our missionary endeavor, whether we define missions in terms of religion or terms of business. Mission work is simply one form of "doing good," and "doing good" is the devil's up-to-date away of keeping people from the one thing needful, which is just—doing right.

I came out of Mexico almost as ignorant as I went in. Of course I had picked up some bric-a-brac of conversational conveniences and lecture equipment with which to entertain respectable people here and make them feel more fortunate and respectable. But all that I brought out of Mexico of any great value was what Marcelino and Juanita taught me—God rest their spirits! In my conceit I did not know they had taught me anything. But the seed of their service was in me.

He was an ignorant peon, she of the same common class. They had been "converted" before I knew them to the same shallow and respectable gospel which I held. But because they were so much the same and because they were unwittingly even more human, they planted the seeds in me of a democracy of which they themselves had never dreamed. I was to them the missionary, the superior, the almoner of the goodness of God, "to whom God in His infinite wisdom had entrusted" not the coal and other treasures of the earth, as Mr. Baer put it once on a time in the antediluvian ages of our social consciousness, but the far mightier treasures of competence, of culture and of character as we are still putting it in respectable circles everywhere whenever we talk of the missionary spirit and plume ourselves on our pretty ways of doing good.

They accepted us at our own estimate and never thought of disputing it. But unwittingly they disturbed that estimate in me. Whether they are living or dead today I know not. I only know that they helped me more than all the men of my own station whom I met in Mexico, and more than all the missionaries whom I have known, to realize what a dangerous denial of fundamental democracy lies under the surface of every missionary mood.

CHAPTER IV.

Slum Work In Seattle.

Seattle, when I reached that city about the 1st of September, 1888, was claiming loudly a population of forty thousand. I had almost written it forty thousand souls, but the town cared very little whether they were souls or not. Tacoma estimated the population of Seattle at the same time as not to exceed thirty thousand, and claimed to have as many residents of her own. The two towns were running neck and neck for the primacy on Puget Sound.

My invitation to Seattle was for three months. Afterward I accepted a call to the regular pastorate for a year, so that my stay there altogether was fifteen months.

One of the incidents of my ministry there was the coming of D. L. Moody for union evangelistic meetings in the big Armory building.

I remember but one of Moody's sermons, though I admired them all at the time. This was his well known discourse on the text, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." I heard him preach it years afterward in California, with very little change. It was evidently a message which he felt very much.

Moody was more human than most ministers, but his humanness showed itself sometimes in severe ways.

I was among the workers in his "inquiry meeting" one night—indeed, every night that he was there, I think. This particular evening I had just finished talking and praying with a man upon whom the sermon of the hour before had made a serious and wholesome impression.

As I straightened up and looked around Mr. Moody saw me. He beckoned to me with his finger, as one accustomed to give orders, and on my approach he said in his brusque fashion, indicating two young women with whom he had been engaged in conversation:

"Here, talk to these girls; they'd just as lief go to hell as not."

The girls giggled as the great evangelist turned away. They had been flattered by the personal attention of the famous man, but they had no real interest in anything I had to say.

There is another girl figure which lingers with me among my memories of Seattle. I write of her with some hesitation, for I never spoke to her, and she was the first of her kind I had ever fairly seen. But the remembrance of the evangelist's emphasis upon the law of retribution, and the recollection of that bit of brusqueness with which he handed over to me the two light-headed young women in that meeting of a quarter century ago brings back to me with a kind of heart-sickening vividness the intimacy, and even homelikeness, of the other scene.

It was after the great fire of the 6th of June, 1889. I had seen the city all but wiped out in a few hours. I had seen it built again almost before the ashes were cold. And as pastor of one of the most prominent churches in the city I had ventured at length, on the solicitation of some of my members, to make a personal investigation of the slums which had grown up under cover of the swift and superficial rebuilding of certain sections of the town, and had taken liberties which they had never dared to take before the fire had burned away the barriers of decency and order.

I can see the things now almost as vividly as I saw it then. The segregated district filled all the scarlet-lighted alleyway in the rear of the saloons which lined thickly one of the main thoroughfares of South Seattle. The buildings used by the women were but flimsy "cribs," their doors flaring wide open to the night. The men shambled with a slouching curiosity, and a general air of moral sloveliness, up and down the narrow passageway. The women—there is no need to mention them. One of them only fixed her features in my mind. She stood in her doorway, parleying with a young man. I saw the door close behind him, saw the flash of her arm as she drew down the telltale curtain, saw the hard look in her face and the sharp triumph with which she gloated over the sordid success she had won.

Hers was a stronger face than the face of either girl whom Mr. Moody turned over to me. There was character there, though character fearfully out of joint. And I was more helpless by far to help her than Mr. Moody had been with the two young girls.

When I turned away I felt as though I had seen my sister walk into an open cesspool, and for fear of soiling myself I had not been able to so much as throw her a rope.

I threw a rope in my congregation next Sunday, but it was a whip of small cords. They winced a little at the plain-

ness of my speech, although most of my lashing was aimed over their shoulders at the city officials.

Afterward I talked with the Chief of Police, or it may have been before. I do not remember his name. I remember only his expression. He had the look of an old doctor who is sure that the case is hopeless, but is equally certain that the young doctor will have to find it out for himself.

I have seen something of police graft, and the stupidities of prison officials, but I do not think these are the most serious difficulties we have to meet in correcting our criminal procedure. The deficiencies of our best jailers are more disturbing in a way than the deficiencies of our worst; they are so much harder to get at.

It isn't the men who know how to make money out of criminals who are most discouraging. It is the personally kind and incorruptible fellows who haven't the least idea how to go to work to make men.

Nor were those men in my church whom I thought most discouraging at the time the men who were really so. Those who helped me most kept me blind a little longer than those whose help was refused. If they had all refused I would have waked up a good deal sooner than I did.

Instead of this some of them helped me into a kind of service which tended to satisfy me at the time.

These were real estate men in the main—I suppose because that was the one business in Seattle just then which gave largest opportunity to the aggressive and adventurous spirit—who got hold of a vacant lot and put a tent upon it, and started a kind of midnight mission right down among the saloons. There I went and preached between Sundays, and tried my first tussle with wickedness in the raw.

Just how many people we helped I do not know. We thought we were doing good, the more so that we felt a kind of tonic reaction upon ourselves. Yet there are no people who need to be on their guard against their own goodness more than the people who work in the slums. It is such an easy way of "slurring your words" in a moral way.

One of our chief helpers, for example, was a man who had been selling peanuts and cheap confections the morning of the great fire. Before he went to sleep that night he had lost all that he had, and more. The next morning he borrowed $10, called on one of the chief business men of the town, rented a prominent corner where the ashes were still warm, and without disturbing the ashes himself, had sublet the place inside of twenty-four hours, so that he had a clear gain of $100 a month.

To him this was a special manifestation of the grace of God. And he sang about Jesus, and talked about Jesus, with the more gusto every time he doubled the deal. If some of us thought of such transactions less in terms of special providence, and preferred to talk of them as simply good business, we were as innocent as he of the actual moral values involved. We rebuked the gamblers with never a thought that our own rent money was taken out of the winning of other men's toil, and we did not suspect that it was this kind of playing with property which had made the rent rate of the neighboring shacks so high that no one but a woman of the town could afford to pay the price.

We were swabbing the slums with one hand and kicking open the sluiceways of immorality with both feet. And while we were on our knees crying aloud over some half-sober penitent, "Oh, Lord, help us to save this poor soul," we were creating conditions for our own material comfort which would damn a dozen for every man saved.

I am not so sure that the frivolous girls of whom Mr. Moody spoke so sharply were more foolish than ourselves. They were shallow, but so were we. They were not so willing to go to hell as he impatiently indicated; they were only slow about deciding to follow his way out.

We talked about Jesus, and sang about Jesus, and had a good time in the persuasion that we were really doing a good deal for Jesus. But if the Man of Nazareth had actually wandered into that tent, and had put into blunt Northfield English the sort of thing that He taught in Galilee some centuries since, we might have done worse than the girls who giggled at a theology which they did not understand. We might have pulled down the red curtain of our shame against him, with the tawdry fineries and all the pathetic price of our surrender to the world and the flesh inside.

CHAPTER V.

The Quest for the Real Question.

While I was acting as student supply for New England pulpits here and there, before I began my regular ministry, I had met a young lawyer who was yet in the early stages of his professional career. He was already an avowed cynic, and a little proud of the fact, I think. His conversation was courteous, albeit somewhat condescending.

In an impersonal way, he made it clear that he had no faith in general in ministers, church members, creeds or religion.

"A lawyer sees too much of the seamy side of life to have much confidence in anybody," was the substance of his testimony.

I made some allowance for his youth then, although he was older than myself. I would make a good deal more allowance for the sophomoric stage of his experience now. Most cynics are sophomores who have petrified. Men who really grow up grow into a broader charity toward their fellows as the years increase, and not into less believing moods. Cynicism is callowness chilled before it has had a chance to flow into normal channels of human sympathy.

But there are serious men who are not cynical who, nevertheless, feel that lawyers and doctors, and business men generally, through a more intimate contact with men, and especially the frailties and foibles of the every-day side of life, have a better chance to see things soberly than does the minister, who is supposed to deal with men and women in their more exalted and less normal moods.

"Ministers don't know men, and therefore they judge unreally," is the way many would put it if they stated it in a few words.

This impression is heightened by the freedom of many ministers from the "small vices" which are common to men.

One of the famous resorts of North Lancashire, in England, is Crookshaw's, at Burnley. My father used to stop there for refreshments when he was a cotton manufacturer, about the time I was born. One of the men he met there was John Lord, of whom I have heard him speak so often that I had the feeling of knowing him, though I was but six years

old when we came away. Two years ago, when I visited England after an absence of forty-two years, I dropped in at Cronkshaw's with my nephew, a Burnley business man. Whom should we meet there but Mr. William Lord, son of John Lord, and "agent" of the Liberal party for that section of Lancashire. Politics are handled there more on lines of first-class business than here.

William Lord was cordiality itself. I had declined with smiling good nature liquors and tobacco, and the everlasting English tea, and Mr. Lord, with some wonder apparent in his face, offered me coffee. When I confessed that I had never taken a cup of coffee in my life, his surprise broke into speech. With broad good nature, and not the least touch of that easy supercilliousness with which we too often mark the dogmatism of our tastes, he inquired quietly:

"What do you confess when you say your prayers?"

Now I have told both these stories for the sake of making clearer yet the point of view from which I am making this study of a minister's life. If any have come to the reading of these articles with the notion that I was going to give them the "seamy side" of churches and ministers and religious work, they must have discovered already that I have nothing of the sort in mind. That is altogether too easy a task, and there is already quite too much of common appetite for it.

The idea that ministers do not know the side of life which makes for pessimism and for cynicism is a mistake. I have associated much with both doctors and lawyers, and I do not believe that either class knows more of human imperfection and inconsistency than do faithful priests and ministers. And it is a very superficial judgment of life, although it will do for a personal pleasantry, that because a man has none of the small vices he has therefore nothing in particular to confess. Moral struggle for a real man is a good deal more than brushing away flies.

My purpose here is neither to confess my own peccadilloes, nor the peccadilloes of other preachers. It is not to uncover the inside mechanics of the ministry, nor to bare the confidential conferences of the churches. I am not going to regale my readers with a record of the scandals which I have known. I could do it, of course. When I was about to become missionary superintendent for Northern and Central California, one of my fellow-ministers, who had traveled much among the churches, said to me very earnestly:

"Don't take the position, Whitaker. If you have to get on the inside of all the troubles in the churches it will spoil

all the religion you have."

People who talk to preachers about the hypocrisies in the churches too often forget that the preachers know more about that sort of thing already than an outsider can possibly know. Their faith has had to overcome such knowledge in order to live.

It is looking this in the face which accounts for the queer twists which a great many ministers get in their theology. That is why so many of them believe that the world is coming to an end soon, because the only way they can keep their optimism is through some program of starting all over again. That accounts for most of the devil-doctrine so far as it still survives among us moderns; only so can some good people account for the vast perversity of the human race. It is because they see the seamy side of life so plainly that the majority of evangelical believers still hold that the natural man is absolutely lost, and that those who are saved are saved by the unmerited grace of God.

The churches do not pose as storage houses of perfection. They admit the badness in human nature, admit it not too little but too much.

I did not lose my religion by going among the churches, although I saw a lot that was morally unsightly. I have long since gotten past all this cheap talk about hypocrisies, either in or out of the churches. Hypocrisy means something more to me now than the conscious and outward inconsistencies of men.

The most dangerous hypocrisy is not humbugging others; it is humbugging yourself.

It is not playing a part consciously; it is playing it unconsciously.

It is not falling over your faults; it is falling over your virtues.

If I do not make you understand that I have written these articles for you in vain.

That is why I have admitted frankly the average goodness of the ministry. That is why I have recognized out of my own experience the high motives which usually actuate the missionary. That is why I have already touched upon the honest enthusiasm of the slum worker. And it is why in every case I have hinted, although I have only hinted yet, at the insufficiency of this goodness in relation to them all—minister, missionary, slum worker. Insufficiency is not a strong enough word. The most serious fault of our goodness is not that there is merely an insufficiency of it. It is rather that our light itself so often becomes a darkness which leads us astray.

You can do something with the boy in school who knows he is backward, whose blunders are the butt of his mates and the burden of his memories. It is the boy who is the admired of all, and who thinks himself that he has arrived, who is the real problem.

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him."

It is not the obvious low living in the churches which is their most serious impediment; it is their unconsciousness of the low quality of their high living. It was not the sinners who turned me from conventional orthodoxy; it was the saints.

Better people than myself, by far, with whom I have been on terms of the utmost intimacy, were unwittingly my teachers in bringing me to the most radical conclusions to which I have come as to the essential moral oneness of all men, and the menace of most of what we call morality to the actual moral health of the world.

As long as I associated with ignorant people I thought school and college meant the perfection of knowledge. It was the intimacy of my contact with school and college in after years which showed me that there is nothing quite so ignorant as our wisdom, after all.

In the next two or three papers I am going to show the actual goodness of the church at work. These are genuine pictures, taken from actual life experiences, and they are shown with genuine appreciation for just what they are. I shall follow them with the story of my contact with evil, through the city officials, through my work as chaplain in the Oregon penitentiary, and through similar service, all of a volunteer character and without official appointment or pay, in the Oregon State Asylum for the Insane and the Oregon Legislature. And then I shall tell how through my California experience I came to see the past more clearly, and to judge the present as I judge it today.

CHAPTER VI.

Spiritual High Lights.

It was the Sunday after Thanksgiving, the second Thanksgiving which I had spent in Seattle. The morning service was done, and the evening sermon was prepared. I intended to speak that night along lines of every-day living on the story of the "Good Samaritan," and in particular on the words with which Jesus concluded that immortal illustration of practical neighborliness, "Go thou and do likewise."

My wife and I went down to the young people's meeting, as we commonly did on Sunday evenings. The room was filled, the singing was enthusiastic, the testimonies were good. This was in the early days of the Christian Endeavor movement, when the work was, from the devotional point of view, at its best.

All through my ministry I have kept the habit of regular study. A minister is his own boss. There is no boss for whom it is more difficult to work than for yourself, unless you hold yourself very firmly in hand. Perhaps my factory experience made me more jealous of holding myself to regular hours in the ministry, or possibly I owe it even more to the iteration of its importance, and the reiteration of it, by one of the professors in the theological seminary. However that may be, I have held my hours pretty regularly, and my sermons have seldom known Saturday night preparation. Usually by Saturday morning they have been ready for the last touches of Sunday finishing. Incidentally I ought to say that, since my first dozen sermons were preached, I have never taken a note into the pulpit, but have trusted to the preparation of logical thought and arrangement and the verbal inspiration of the hour.

I had my sermon comfortably ready that night before I entered the Christian Endeavor meeting, even to the last mental reviewing of it an hour or two before. The meeting was hardly under way before I felt a deep dissatisfaction with it. One of the songs was a favorite of other days, less used in the churches now, "Almost Persuaded." The singing was hardly under way when I felt a strong impression to preach upon the text at the basis of the song, taking it, of course, in its old-time accepted reading, which is almost certainly an incorrect rendering of Paul. I refused the suggestion instantly. My pride of intellectual procedure in those early days of my ministry was such that I had little use for "mere impressions."

"I have made careful and reasonable preparation for what I am going to say tonight," I argued with myself, "and I am not going to run after any momentary impulses."

Nevertheless the impression persisted and prevailed. An outline of thought unrolled itself before me as spontaneously as the text had come to me, and in spite of the interruptions of attention consequent upon the course of the meeting, with its many human elements, I found myself in the pulpit a little later with my previously prepared sermon impossible to me, and with this message so to the front of my thinking and feeling that I could not refuse it. I preached as I had been impressed to preach, with freedom and power.

Before the service was done, a second impulse came crowding into my mind, to be resisted and to conquer as before. This time the impulse was to hold an "inquiry meeting" in the rear room as soon as the benediction was said. Such after-meetings were not common with me then, nor with that church. The rear room was not convenient. Those who stayed would have to pass the pulpit, and go up certain steps, instead of doing the much easier and more natural thing, which would be to follow the crowd and go out. It seemed likely that none would stay except those who were already fully persuaded of the things which I preached.

But I followed the impulse again. The rear room was well filled.

One man was there for whom the sermon and the after-meeting marked a crisis that night. He had been there in the morning, and it is possible that my knowledge of the fact, and my sensibility to his situation and moods, had something to do with both of the impulses which I have described. I am not concerned to postulate any supernatural origin for them. Neither am I anxious, as I might have been once on a time, to explain them in what we call "purely natural" ways. The notion that you can explain everything can be worked altogether too hard. Supernaturalists are very superstitious—indeed, only a little less superstitious than materialists. I am just telling you what happened, and how some of us felt about it that night. Perhaps it will help you to understand why the goodness of the churches satisfies some people who ought not to be so easily satisfied.

The man was a drunkard. I had never seen him in the gutter, and I do not know that he had ever been there. But he was an alcoholic, to use a more exact and scientific term than drunkard, which, I take it, means very much the same thing. He was poor, his family were poor, and his grit was gone the

way of the bottle.

His wife was a member of the church, a devout patient woman. She had wanted me to meet him. He was shy of preachers. I had shaken hands with him, but had avoided any religious talk. I had no special reason to think he would be there that night.

He was not only there, but he was "clothed and in his right mind." He stood up in the after-meeting and took a decided stand for the better life. I have not seen him or heard of him these many years, but the last I knew of him he was a sober and sincerely religious man.

Now these facts came out afterward.

My wife, a very matter-of-fact woman, not pious but simply and naturally devout, had been burdened for him mentally all afternoon. The impression of his need had been peculiarly emphatic with her. Spiritual experiences were for her very hard to talk about. She had a deep, reverent reticence which piosity never has. She did not even mention her mood to me. But inwardly she was much in prayer for the man all the afternoon.

In my wife's Sunday School class was a young woman whom I had seen born again. Her's was the only spiritual birth which I ever actually saw. I am not attempting here to define what the spiritual birth is. Let that go, and call it by any other name which you please. This I know, she sat before me one day, and I made the way of the divine life as plain to her as I could. She was of the strong, vigorous type, big in body, quick in mind, a really handsome woman in her best days, with the promise of her mature strength and beauty already upon her. She was, as Holland puts it, in Kathrina, no weakling.

"But a round woman, who with insight keen
Had measured well her womanhood."

I saw the hesitation linger in her eyes in spite of all my explanations—the absolute sincerity of her soul as she refused to assent where her conviction was not clear. Then as I paused, and we were silent together for a moment, I saw the sudden illumination of understanding flash into her eyes. She was another woman from that hour.

Now, she also, unknown to me, and unknown to my wife, had been burdened all that day for this man. She had only a casual acquaintance with the family, I am sure, and there were no special natural attachments which drew her to them. But while I was going over in review that afternoon the sermon which I did not preach that night, and while my wife was inwardly invoking the guidance of the Spirit for the man's de-

liverance from the devil of drink and all the down-pull of the meaner man, she also was praying, without any outward contact with us, or knowledge of the fellowship of anybody with her mood.

Her praying was practical. As he rose to his feet after the benediction in the main meeting, and hesitated whether to go toward the rear room, his wife not daring to speak to him lest she rouse a contrary mood, this young girl had stepped to his side and in the simplest fashion possible asked him to stay a little longer and attend the other meeting as well. Her cordial simplicity turned his steps toward the room where he chose decisively the man's part.

I have not told this story to impose any explanation of it upon you. Take it as supernaturally or naturally as you please. I have told the experience to help you understand the churches at their best, and why it is that so many people are satisfied with them. They ought not to be, as I am going to try to show. Their best blinds them to a better, I believe. But you cannot understand them if you will not enter into their best and try to see it from their point of view. How can you help them to see that their good is hindering them if you will not admit that it is good at all? You cannot even help a child so.

"Ah, but that was fine, only I saw a finer behind it which I am afraid you are not going to bring out because your good is just good enough to satisfy you as it is," said a music teacher who had just listened to the best work of his pupil. "You do so well I am afraid you will never do better." And there were almost tears in his eyes.

And you who have only beratings for the churches, you will never help them to the mightier music which they ought to produce till you are able to listen sympathetically and intelligently to the strongest and sweetest strains which they are singing now.

CHAPTER VII.

Comfortable Goodness.

One cannot understand the churches, and the contentment which many good people have in them, without taking into account such mystic experiences as that which I have just told. One such experience is enough to hold many a man through a hundred disagreeable dealings with the inconsistencies of his fellows. There may be gaps in a man's creed which his thinking cannot bridge, but when it works miracles for him he will stand for a lot of lapses between. It isn't faith in the miracles of yesterday which keeps any of the churches going; it is the fact that something of the seemingly miraculous anyway is part of the experience of all of them today.

I could duplicate this relation with many another quite as remarkable, as I presume every minister could.

When B. Fay Mills preached his first sermon at Salem during my ministry there he spoke on the reported saying of Jesus at the grave of Lazarus, "Roll ye away the stone." There was no discussion of miracles in it, and it was, like most of his preaching, quite unimpassioned in form. But I knew of one miracle which came out of it.

Two women had been enemies for years, so that they had not spoken, although they moved of necessity more or less in the same social circles. The one whom I knew best was one of the proudest women whom I have ever known, of social prominence, and not of ordinarily devout mood. No one said a word to her in a religious way that afternoon, and no one had the slightest suspicion of what it was in her heart to do. Yet after a brief, bitter struggle with her own heart, she did the apparently impossible thing, incredible to those who knew her best. She put her pride under her feet and walked deliberately over to the other woman's house, which was some distance away, and went in and asked to be forgiven, though she would have been killed rather than do it the day before.

I laid my hand on a young man's shoulder one night in that same series of meetings and said simply, "I wish you were a Christian." That was absolutely all that I said. I have called him a young man, but he was thirty-five, I suppose, and he had not been a church-going man at all. He came into the church afterward, only a few days later, and confessed that the touch of my hand and that one friendly wish had revolutionized his way of looking at life.

But I will not dwell upon these things because there is another side to the attractiveness of ordinary church life, and the contentment of many with respectable goodness or religiousness, which needs to be taken into account. It is not miracles which keep most people in the churches who continue there, or the appearance of miracles, if you like that way of putting it better. It is rather the comfortableness, the home-i-ness, to use a word which isn't in the dictionary and ought to be—one might almost say the "coziness" of the fellowship which one finds there.

There is a comfortableness in being respectable, and in the associations of respectable people, which keeps many a man from daring the discomfort of being a better man.

I did not want to go to Salem. There were two reasons for this, the first that I wanted much more to go to California when I turned away from Puget Sound. The second reason was that at the time the Salem church did not have a good reputation for unity. There had been some sharp divisions of counsel between the young people and the older people about keeping the previous pastor.

"Don't go," said one of my ministerial friends to me when Salem was mentioned. "I wouldn't touch that church with a forty-foot pole."

What the world says about the churches is nothing to what ministers sometimes say among themselves.

Nevertheless I went, under circumstances which if detailed here would seem to some more miraculous, and to others more absurdly mystical in that interpretation of them, than any story which I have yet told. A call that was unanimous, where unanimity had seemed out of the question a little while before; an acceptance that was written and never sent, but replaced before posting by a refusal; a snowstorm that lengthened the announcement of "twenty minutes for refreshments" at Ashland, when we were almost over the line into California, into an actual stay of thirteen days at that point, and a very reluctant return over the road which was washed away immediately behind us; a flood that turned all central Oregon into an inland sea; days of indecision in which we were marooned between Salem and Portland, ending in another visit to Salem, another call, and an acceptance this time which I felt no desire to withdraw, these are the bare outlines of an experience that gave me sympathetic understanding of how some people can be quite persuaded of the doctrine of special providence. I hardly think that the floods which made the first weeks of 1890 so memorable in Oregon that old settlers compared conditions with the

historic high waters of 1861 were actually provided to keep me out of California, or to insure my settlement in the "Webfoot State" for awhile, although that was one of the minor by-products of those atmospherically strenuous days. But there is no doubt that the sense of a providential leading pervading all the phenomena of life is strong in the churches and among many good people outside of the churches, and has something to do with their contentment with things as they are, and their feeling of being in good standing with God.

Altogether my ministry in Salem was the most broadly human ministry I have known. Never have I had a more united church behind me than I had from first to last of my residence there. Never have I known a more kindly or sincerely religious people than there. I think of Salem yet with the warmth and with something of the heartache with which one remembers a family circle that has ceased to be.

If material matters had much to do with my going to Salem they had also much to do with the prosperity of my pastorate there. Some things which entered into my success were so ordinary, so insignificant in themselves, and, as some people would say, so quite apart from the dignities of the ministry, that it is hard to tell them so that others will understand how much more they mean than the mere facts on the surface show. But I see them now as I did not see them then in relation to the larger failures of the religious life, and they mean more to me than they did when I used them as instruments of success long ago.

One of the first calls that I made in Salem was on one of my deacons, who was employed very long hours in a bakery. I did not think much about the hours of his employment then. What I noticed with an almost childish interest was that he was making candy—molasses peppermints—and that the process was so simple I was confident I could do it myself. I did. Either from him, or someone else, about the same time, I learned how to make "fondant"—that is, the foundation for cream candies of many kinds. A little later, calling this time on another religious friend in Portland whose conditions of labor I might have considered more, I obtained the secret of covering creams with chocolate, and went home and worked that trick of the confectioner's trade also. My wife and I were not expert confectioners when all our home experimenting was done, and made no pretense to be, but I am quite safe in saying, and it is no mere pun either, that we made that parsonage while we were in it the sweetest spot in town to a host of young people, and sweetened religion for them at the same time.

The old house, with its moss-covered roof on which in the

springtime fell the seedling cherries from two wide-spreading trees, said to be of missionary-pioneer origin, was the most picturesque home in which I have ever lived. The door from the front porch opened directly into the living room. On the opposite side of the room was a fireplace which "drew" perfectly. Oak logs were cheap in Salem then, and their smoke ascended as a perpetual incense through all the long wet winter months. I covered the fire almost as carefully as a Parsee priest at night, and uncovered it at morning after the manner of the forefathers in the days before sulphur matches were made. And always in the evening it flared its welcome to all who opened our outer door.

The old manse—literally a moss-covered manse it was in those days—was more than our home; it was the home of all our people as well. The back door was hardly twenty feet from the side door of the church which opened into the north wing where our devotional meetings and social meetings were held, and where our women folks cooked and served meals every now and then that were famed all over town.

Was there a dish to borrow? someone stepped across to our kitchen door. Was there anything left over? It went the way of the same convenient aperture. Did someone faint in church, or turn sick? They were led or carried to the lounge which spread its inviting length beside the rear window. Everybody came and went there much as they pleased, sometimes taking possession of the house in our absence and doing the cooking or the candy-making in advance. Yet I do not remember that we ever felt this intimacy a burden to us then. A nobler group of young people, and one more morally in earnest within the limitations of their thought I have never known.

This is not primarily a personal narrative, and I am not telling these particulars quite in a personal way. It is a study of goodness as I have seen it in actual contact with churches and respectable people, and as I have come to see it inwardly of late years. The supreme appeal of the churches still is probably their mysticism, and with mysticism I have a good deal of sympathy yet. Mysticism has its limitations and its dangers, but they are not more marked in my thinking, and I hold myself free in my thinking, than are the limitations and the dangers of materialism. But if the supreme appeal of the churches is mysticism, the sense of the invisible and the immeasurable in human life, the ordinary appeal of the churches which makes them persistently attractive to many is on the social side. The minister who can create most of the home atmosphere in his church and can hold the largest number to the family feeling is the minis-

ter of our day who commonly wins.

I did a good deal of hard pulpit work at Salem and was reckoned a popular preacher there. We had as I have indicated strong spiritual experiences. But the fireplace and the open kitchen door, the candy hook and the confabs before the fire, the chit-chat over English literature and the dabblings in German and other studies with my young people who were out of school, these were the things that made my ministry there so good to us and to many more; these were the things which made many content to seek no farther for goodness than that which they had found. They almost contented me. If I had seen no other side of life at Salem I might have been quite satisfied with the snug Phariseeism of it. It was some uncomfortable people on the outside who made me uncomfortable, and led me the way that showed me how dangerou a matter contentment itself may be.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Ministry of the Uncomfortable.

The only time that I have ever suffered violence in my ministry was during my residence in Salem. I was more to blame for it than the man who tried to do me harm.

There was no segregated district in Salem then, so far as I know, but the red shame flaunted itself on some of the principal thoroughfares. I could not pass from the parsonage straight down Liberty street to the main thoroughfare, along which the street cars went to Willamette University and the station, without seeing the symbols of this indecency on a house front which belonged to one of the city officials. Or, if the symbols were withheld it was common knowledge that the moral leprosy itself was there.

One Sunday night I said my say about it, in stinging words. Knowing the ordinary imperviousness of the politicians to pulpit pronouncements, I went out of my way to make the whiplash of my word cut to the quick. I was young, and I did not realize then the unfairness of personalities in the pulpit, where the preacher has every advantage and the other man has no chance to hit back. My remarks were especially in bad taste, as I see it now, that I made the man's appearance the instrument of my indignation against him for his social offenses. It was this, as the event proved, which hurt.

A day or two afterward I had a polite note from him, asking me to call at the store where he worked and talk the matter over with him.

I had no suspicion that any violence was intended, and I have my doubts now whether he had anything of the kind in mind when he wrote. I would probably have gone in any case, though I might have been more on my guard.

It was a general merchandise store and he received me in the office. He stated his complaint against me quietly, and we talked about it and about his ownership of the misused property without any harsh words. He was sullenly evasive on his part, and I did not feel then that I could budge in the direction of softening what I had said.

As we walked down the long store together suddenly he sprang upon me and began to pummel my head with his fists. I had no time to put myself in an attitude of defense. Besides I had never been a fighter, except for the "rassling" squabbles of my youth which were not of a very serious sort. I was

mightily interested in militarism as a boy, but pugilism never appealed to me at all.

I suppose now that the object of my assailant was to get even with me for what I had said about his face by spoiling the looks of my own. He was not quite quick enough, however, and, sudden as the assault was, I was able to fend off his blows with my arms so that he landed only one or two hard knocks on the top of my head, which did not even knock me down. One fair-sized bump I remember he left as a souvenir of the melee for a few days. Before he could do further damage the men in the store seized him, and I passed out into the street.

Among my friends there was, of course, swift, hot talk of violence in return. But the mob mood was not according to my mind, and I promptly put a quietus on all such talk. The attack injured the opposition more than it hurt my standing in the town, and since I had made no attempt to strike back there were some who were inclined to give me more credit for the forbearance than I deserved.

If there was any merit on my part, it was that after the first excitement of the experience was over I conscientiously put away from my mind all resentment toward the man. I think I was more to blame than he, so far as the attack is concerned, as I have already indicated. But in the correcting of the evil I think his method was even more stupid than mine. Violence of words is bad enough as a curative measure, but bodily violence is nearly always a fool's game.

A remark made by one of my best members, and best friends, about that time did me a great deal more good than the blows which I had received. The remark was made to someone else, and was passed on to me.

"Well," he said, in his dry fashion, "I am surprised that a man who has as much sense as Brother Whitaker hasn't got more."

It took some years for that remark to soak in.

Another Sunday evening in Salem I said some very plain things about the illicit liquor selling in the drug stores in town. One of the young men of my church, from one of the foremost families, was the proprietor of one of the drug stores. He was mad, mad clear through, when he heard, with additions I suppose, what I had said.

Now the humorous part of the matter was that until he got mad about it I had no idea he was doing it. Of course then I knew he was guilty. It is always easy to get mad when you are wrong. And he was madder at himself, although he would not admit it then, when I told him to his face that it was

his own anger which had given him away.

He fairly raged at me. I stood it with reasonable good nature until he said:

"You don't know which side your bread is buttered on or you'd take a different tack."

Then I flared up.

"Look here," I answered, calling him by his first name, "I want you to understand that I'm not preaching for bread and butter, and I always keep enough money on hand to pay my fare out of this town in either direction."

Then I turned on my heel and left the store.

It is to his credit that when he had cooled off he was more friendly with me than before, and always swore by me from that time. Religion never got much hold on him. He was human, very human as I learned afterward. Yet I found the man in him, I think, and, finding the man in him, one of the weakest of my members, helped me to find the man in myself. It is for this that I have written of him here, because he also was one of my teachers in learning the new-old ethic of Jesus.

Another evening in Salem, a Saturday evening, I think, I went through the saloons. Word had come to me that there was almost unrestrained gambling going on. I took a young workingman with me, donned a soft slouch hat which had been new once on a time, and rather to my own surprise went through thirteen saloons before I was recognized. If I had but known it the fact itself was eloquent with witness to the remoteness of the minister and the churches from the man of the street.

In the fourteenth saloon a man who was half drunk recognized me, and welcomed me with maudlin cordiality, assuring me that I was doing just the right thing, and that preachers ought to do a good deal more of seeing the sights for themselves. I was not as much impressed with either his welcome or his reasoning at the time as I was afterward. If the Man of Nazareth had lived in Salem I suspect that every man about town would have known Him offhand.

The town marshal and I had a tilt over the matter in the public prints. He was willing enough, so he said, to prosecute the gamblers, if gambling was actually going on, if I or anybody else would furnish the evidence. I have met that attitude on the part of paid officials since, and a good deal nearer San Francisco. I shall deal with it more at length in due time.

Just now I note three incidents merely to mark the course of my contact with moral derelicts here and there in an individual way. I am going to tell of the larger contact with humanity

outside of the churches in the next few chapters, with the "defective classes," and also with the "higher-ups," to use popular terms. I want now just to mention one individual more who ministered to some inner discomfort on my part, and helped me to see Phariseeism in a less superficial way.

He was neither good nor bad as the labels are commonly used. He sat in the church sometimes and listened to me with good-natured tolerance and probably considerable appreciation of certain incidental human elements in my preaching. Literary likings drew us together and he was often at our fireside of a winter night. He did some work for the Overland Monthly afterwards, was reporter later for a San Francisco daily or two, held a responsible position in New York City in connection with Pacific Coast promotion work, and is I think booming the Panama Exposition now. At the time I met him, he was working in a hardware store in Salem.

When I think of the hardware store I think of some of the "jobs" he told me of with a good-natured laugh. Some of them had to do with church people, and the "rake-offs" which they had drawn for the very nails which were used in the building of the churches. He was not a cynic. He was too humorously healthy for that sort of sentiment to prevail in him. He made no effort to make a cynic of me. I could not make a "Christian" of him. But we helped each other into a bigger and more human feeling toward our fellows. I gave him a chance to see how much of sincere goodness there was inside the churches, lovable in spite of its posing and primping. He made me see, with others such as those I have already mentioned, how much there is of badness in the world, if I may put it that way, which has a strangely human lovableness about it. I showed him the gold under the glitter, he showed me the gold under the stain and dirt. He learned that among the good it wasn't all pretense on top. I was learning that among the bad, the worldly, even the disreputable, there were veins of richest quality underneath. Both together we were coming to see slowly that the only goodness which is very much worth while, the goodness that goes deeper than all the "righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees" is goodness of heart toward all our humankind.

CHAPTER IX.

PIETY AND PRISON WALLS.

I am puzzled now to say whether it was goodness of heart toward the prisoners first of all, or a sense of professional obligation and opportunity, or sheer curiosity, which took me first to the penitentiary. It may have been a mixture of all these moods.

The Oregon penitentiary was the first which I had ever seen in a familiar way; indeed, the first of which I had ever seen the inside. I have seen very few since. Prisons are as painful to me as slums, and, in my opinion now as disgraceful to the civilization which sustains them both.

There were no women in the Oregon penitentiary when I was at Salem. There were four hundred men. Many of them were young men, some of them hardly more than boys. I think the average age was ony about twenty-two or twenty-four. The prisoners were employed, in the main, in the stove factory in the east yard.

The administration was very liberal then. I suppose that is the term to use. W. S. Downing, the superintendent, was a kindly man, not at all of the sharp or professionally political type. He did not look professional at all. You might easily have taken him for an Oregon farmer, or for one of the easy-going business men of the town with a store half full of goods such as had been in vogue down in Maine half a century before. He ran the institution in old-fashioned ways, with less of severity than the old times knew, but with little accounting with modern ideas.

I had access to the penitentiary on almost my own terms. I came and went with freedom, sitting out in the back yard with the life-termers and talking with them as freely as I might have done by own fireside. The going in and the coming out was always with careful regard, of course, to the safe-keeping of the prisoners, and I did not venture often into the shops, and never without the presence of guards, as there were men sufficiently desperate among those thus employed to have made either a living buttress or a bloody carcase of my body with equal unconcern. But among the old fellows, of whom less strenuous tasks were required and who sat sometimes and swapped stories in the shadow of the buildings, I felt all the freedom and unconsciousness which their dingy suits of striped gray cloth would permit.

The services which I held there on Sunday afternoons were generally attended by a good delegation of my people. Some of them went to sing and some only to see or, at the most, to hear how I would talk to the men. The town folks sat in the same room with the prisoners, but to one side, and on the other side to my left was the organ and a few of the best singers. In front of me sat as many of the men as cared to come out of their cells. I suspect that the freedom of the hour had as much to do with their presence as any interest in what I might say. Many would not come for sectarian reasons, and some out of contempt for religion and ministers in general. The ordinary audience was probably 125 to 150 men. The place where we met, which I have called a room, was the open space between the tiers of cells in the center of the building, from which the iron cages reached away north and south, both upstairs and down. It was almost as difficult to speak there as I have found it since out of doors.

My preaching was not very gentle, I am afraid. I was shy of "sentimentalism" toward the prisoners in those days, and had been brought up on the old prayer-book adage concerning the law and its officers as "a terror to evil-doers." I was not unsympathetic, but I held conventional and generally accepted ideas about the criminal classes. Incidentally I may remark that at that time and for a considerable while afterward I believed in capital punishment.

The first of the prisoners whom I came to know in a personal way was a man who would have been hanged if he had been a negro. His name was not Williams, but that will do to identify him here. He was about forty-five or fifty years of age and had been in the penitentiary in the neighborhood of eight years when I met him, perhaps not quite as long. He was a quiet, inoffensive sort of man, inclined to be religious. I did not take his religious professions very seriously at the beginning. If they had any influence upon me they rather prejudiced me against him. I suspected that he was cultivating the preacher so as to get a pardon the sooner. The facts in his case did not help him much in my mind.

On the road north of Salem there lived an old farmer with a German name, whose wife was unfaithful to him. Her paramour was a negro. This man Williams also fell under the domination of the negro, who kept him drunk for weeks at a time. One night the negro and Williams lay in the fence corner when the old man was expected home and shot him down in his wagon. Two guns were used, one of them a gun which Williams had carried. Williams claimed from first

to last that he had done no shooting himself. He admitted that he had been a weak, drunken fool, and that he had not been sober for many days before the crime was done. The negro had used him as a stool pigeon. At the fatal moment the negro, after firing with his own gun, had grasped Williams' gun and used that to complete the job.

The negro was hanged, as there is no doubt he deserved to be. Williams can not be said on the strength of his story, even if it was true, to have deserved much better. The color of his skin, and possibly some cash and influence at his command, saved his neck, and he was sent to the penitentiary for life. The average life sentence in Oregon at that time was actually about eleven years. Williams served nine.

I was very slow in taking his part, and was never very active for him. Convinced at length by watching him critically myself for a year or two, and by the common testimony of prison officials and outside parties who had known him much longer and more intimately than I, and by the concessions of even some among his fellow prisoners, I went to Governor Pennoyer, with whom I had a measure of acquaintance and influence, and got the pardon.

I could write much of the morning when I received it and went out to the prison with it in my pocket, and of the marvelously quiet way in which the man heard the news of his release. He stopped in our home that night, had breakfast with us the next morning, and I kept tab on him for a while, though I have lost track of him long ago. Two things only I want to emphasize in connection with his case.

To get the pardon he had to have a petition, or recommendation, signed by certain of the legal authorities who had sent him up. To obtain this he was compelled to raise $100, which he did through some relatives almost as poor as himself. I mentioned the matter casually to the governor, who was quite indignant about it.

"Unless that money is pulled down I will not touch pen to his pardon," said Pennoyer.

I knew him well enough to believe that he meant what he said. Williams, when informed of the hitch with the Governor, was depressed, but a few days later told me the $100 deposit had been withdrawn. After he was out he confessed confidentially that he had had to pay the $100, though in a more indirect way.

Williams was turned loose with $5 and a cheap suit of clothes. He lived—as long as I knew him—a quiet, law-abiding life. His was not a strong character, but he was a better

man at many points than a lot of the successful men whom I have known—more kindly, less mercenary and naturally much less self-assertive and indifferent to the rights of others. His punishment was not too severe, but it might have been more human and less mechanical while he was in jail, and society might have recognized much more rationally its own part in his crime and its interest in giving him a larger chance to redeem his later years. So far as the State was concerned his liberty was made dependent upon personal influences and even commercial considerations to a disgraceful degree, and when he was turned out he was put forth with less purpose and provision than a sensible farmer would show in the disposition of an old horse.

My Sunday afternoon services in the Oregon penitentiary were a good deal of a strain upon me in a physical way. I carried at that time four and sometimes five services a day. But the strain upon my feelings was much greater than the direct physical exhaustion, and I was forced to ease up on the work before I left Salem. The hardest part of the strain was the extent to which intimate acquaintance with the law's dealings with the men behind the bars outraged my sense of all that was decent and right and just.

I kept no notes and I cannot reproduce particulars now as I knew them then. I can only testify that, as in old Mexico, the stupidities of the street stirred me to a continual storm of inner protest, the stupidities of the Oregon courts stirred me to an even greater degree because I felt that there was less allowance to be made. I was mad inside whenever I spent an hour or two at the penitentiary, utterly disgusted and depressed both with the low moral levels of the prisoners and more so with what I learned of society's selfish, sordid and worse than stupid dealings with them.

Here, for instance, was a man sent up for three years for stealing a salmon, while in the same prison and approximately at the same time was another who had shot one of his fellows down in Portland, had been two or three times condemned to be hanged, and had at length escaped through the adeptness of his attorneys, or for reasons even less rational, with a term of one year, which on good behavior was reduced to ten months.

Here was a lad who, bullied into a state of reckless bitterness by a boy bigger than himself, after vainly warning his tormenter, had, in a moment of passion on the way home

from Sunday school, struck his older companion with his jack-knife. The wound proved fatal, and the boy was there among the life-termers, as though society had no responsibility in the matter beyond putting him out of the way.

The cleverest man in the penitentiary, a Harvard graduate, had been condemned to be hanged, though he pleaded self-defense. His request for a new trial had been denied, and the court had adjourned for the season, beyond the day when he was to be hanged. He got a small file surreptitiously, fixed the doors of his cell so that the grand jury inspected it a few hours before he took French leave of it without suspicion that anything was wrong, and mocked them and the law by providing the same newspaper which published the grand jury's report with a simultaneous news item to the effect that he was gone. He stayed out till the court reconvened, surrendered himself then, secured another trial and got a life sentence, which ended in pardon, of course.

Take them all in all, criminals are a stupid lot, but society's dealing with them is only a little less stupid—and criminal. Our system of dealing with the slum product is as heart-sickening as the slums themselves. And our first aid for the criminally wounded who have fallen into open pits of passion, or over stumbling stones of misplaced circumstances, is as crude and barbaric as was the surgery of our forefathers. The prisons are much more than laboratories of crime—they are glaring exhibits of the ignorance, apathy, the mercenary contentment and the unconscious cruelties of the good.

CHAPTER X.

The Sane and Insane.

The State Asylum for the Insane at Salem was on the same side of town as the penitentiary, about a mile northward of the prison. The grounds were open here, were very beautifully kept, and the buildings made the appearance from the road of a college or hospital or some sort of public home. It was a hospital in name, and I think that conception of its function was kept carefully to the front. Doctor Rowland, who had charge of it, was a genial, almost motherly man.

Commonly, I alternated my Sunday afternoons at the penitentiary with my Sunday afternoons at the asylum, although on one or two rare occasions I preached at both places besides my three appointments down town the same day. The service at both places was purely voluntary on my part, and I did not receive even my expenses when I went and came to and from the penitentiary by the cars. I am glad to remember now that it was an unpaid service which I gave.

My first afternoon at the asylum was more uncomfortable than my first preaching service in the neighboring prison. The audience was about the same in size. The room was better, a hall provided for entertainments and social affairs, where dancing was commonly done the night before. Some of them did not know the difference between my preaching and the music for the dance.

"I like to hear you sing," said one of them to me, with a grin which covered all his foolish face; "it's bully!"

That was before the days of Roosevelt, too.

The most disconcerting man in my audience that first Sunday was a man who was an adept at wriggling his scalp. If I looked in his direction he kept the whole top of his head, which was well covered with hair, going back and forth with an effect that was quite uncanny. The movements of his head were all on the outside; there was nothing but an almost idotic paralysis underneath.

Occasionally a man got up and swore at me under the impression that I was saying something in a personal way, and was led out by the attendants, protesting as he went. Generally speaking, the patients were remarkably well behaved. I had more trouble with deliberate inattention and

conscious discourtesy sometimes of a Sunday evening in town. I learned to preach as easily before the audience at the asylum as before my own people, used the same sermons, and came to feel that whether my hearers were convicts, "crazies," or the conventional congregation, the human factor was the biggest in them all. Despite their superficial differences they were wonderfully alike.

The attendants usually sat by themselves at the rear of the hall to my left. Some of them were women. They were dressed more like outsiders than were the patients as a rule. Had they been scattered through the audience and dressed the same I could not always have picked them out. And this not because they looked less than normal, but because so many of the patients made as good an appearance as the average of men and women outside.

One young woman puzzled me a good deal the first time she was there. She sat with the attendants and was as well dressed as any of them. Only an excessive nervousness made me suspect that she was a patient. This suspicion was confirmed when the sermon was done. She recovered after a few months.

Two of her sayings have stayed with me. Once when I had closed the service she took my hand as I went out, and without any effusiveness said, in her quick, nervous way, "I like to hear you preach. You talk to us as if we had some sense, and we have, if we are crazy."

The whole philosophy of the changed attitude toward the insane which has made hospitals of our former "mad-houses" was in that saying. We are moving rationally toward the treatment of the irrational. We shall never move morally toward the treatment of the immoral till we treat them as if they had character in spite of their crimes.

Another time I was passing through the asylum with some friends. Many of the patients who knew me came up to speak with me as I passed through the wards. This young woman greeted me cordially when we entered the ward where she was. As she was ready to go she said to our guide, one of the attendants:

"I wish you would tell the doctor I have need of him to attend to two teeth."

"Your teeth?" queried the attendant, wih a grin.

He was a rather common looking fellow and would have been taken for a patient much sooner than herself.

With utmost scorn she turned upon him:

'I wouldn't be very likely to be troubling the doctor about

other people's teeth," she said, and swept away from him with the dignity of a queen.

There is a great deal of need yet of seeing to it, both in the asylums and out of them, that the attendants shall equal in character those upon whom they attend.

I sat in the superintendent's office one day with another patient, a man of about 60 years. He was well known in Oregon and had been associated with some of the big builders of the State. He was a thinker, a philosopher, and before I had talked with him fifteen minutes I felt very immature in his presence. Had I met him anywhere else I would have been even more abashed. He recovered his normal mind and was released a little later.

The thing that impressed me that day was the unaffected dignity and consideration with which he was treated. He was met on every hand, so far as I could see, as if he were still a man.

There were doubtless abuses in the Oregon Hospital for the Insane, but it was, on the whole, the most rational society which I have ever seen. The people were all comfortably housed, all comfortably clothed, all comfortably fed. The strong waited upon the weak, and ministered to them. A man, though crazy, was recognized as a man "for 'a that and 'a that." Men were not blamed for their misfortunes, though many were undoubtedly to blame. Those who came there through their own excesses were met with the same consideration as those who had slipped a cog in their mental machinery by some accident of circumstance. There was as much wickedness housed there as there was in the penitentiary, for insanity is in the multitude of instances a by-product of sin. But it was treated in a radically different way, from a radically different point of view. Blame reigned behind the dull gray walls of the penitentiary. Brotherhood reigned in the homelike hospital on the other road.

I am not a Christian Scientist, although I have read Christian Science literature freely for twenty years. I have come, I hope, to the Christian attitude toward it, which is one of sincere rejoicing in all the good its followers do. Of this also I am quite sure, that if their fundamental ideas, leaving philosophical and religious forms aside for the moment, could more generally prevail, there would be vastly less of insanity than there is. Even as our institutions are, serener moods and more trustful attitudes would save many from both mental and moral wreck.

But it is a pity that good people cannot be as good toward their fellows who are reckoned sane as towards those who have

been made public wards by a commission on lunacy. God knows there are abuses enough in our hospitals yet, but at least they are not of public intention. Only last night a woman told me of the death of her sister in one of the State institutions of California through cold and want of sufficient food and the neglect of her attendants. But even she did not maintain that the people intended it so. There is one class, anyway, toward whom good people mean to be good today, and those are the people who have failed in the one point which most differentiates the man and the beast.

While yet a student preacher one summer in Vermont, they showed me at the poor farm a woman who had been insane for forty years. They could not keep a garment upon her, except a single, strong heavy serge. She could neither stand nor talk. Never have I looked into such pathetic eyes as hers. She knew less than the deer which smote me to the heart with his dying glances in the California mountains. Her muteness, and the straining of her soul against its long bondage to the flesh, smote me more.

Yet she was treated with more of public concern than the ordinary working woman of the State. The good were good to her, as good as their ordinary absorption in their own affairs would allow them to be. Had she been sane she would have been less a sister than she was in her stolid, brutelike state .

Many of the patients at the asylum in Salem were perfectly sane except on a single line. One of them, who worked about the farm, was so normal in most matters that I was told you could talk with him for a week without suspecting that there was anything wrong with him. It was only when you talked about Mexico that he was queer. Then he was voluble with protests as to his rights there. He was a king, or prince, or something of that sort with respect to Mexico. There are people running newspapers now who are more dangerously out of their heads whenever Mexico is named.

It was much the same with the attendants after all. Talk with them on most lines and they were rational enough. It was only when you tried to reason with them about a sane social order, as brotherly outside of the asylum as that which they were supposed to administer inside the asylum, that they grew uneasy and incoherent in their replies. And that which was true of them was true of my people, the very best of them, down town.

CHAPTER XI.

PRAYING FOR THE POLITICIANS.

I did no lobbying in the Legislature at Salem, but I took my part with the other preachers of the town in praying for the politicians.

Like the preaching at the penitentiary and the asylum, the praying in the Legislature was entirely voluntary and unpaid. That was the redeeming feature of it, in my opinion both then and now. In general I think that paid chaplaincies cost the cause of religion more than any advantage which they bring to those who are supposed to be served by them can offset. Especially does it seem to me that praying for the legislators at $5 a prayer is a most questionable use of public money.

I am not sure that praying for them for nothing, in a public way, is worth much more than it costs. Possibly the fault was mine, but I found it exceedingly hard to talk with God in that official way, and in the presence of many to whom my prayers were a mere mumbling of words. There may have been some who were sincerely on the side of such a service, and who followed me as devoutly as they would have done in church. If so, none of them said so. The general expression was one of more or less polite suffrance of a conventional custom which it was not good politics to ignore or obstruct.

The only cane which I have kept of several which have come to me in one way and another during my ministry stands close at hand now. I keep it as a curio, never having had any occasion to use that sort of thing, either for support or for display. It was passed out to me through the postoffice window by Fred Lockley, I think, afterwards prominent on the editorial staff of the Pacific Monthly, and frequently in those days one of our fireside group in the parsonage, although not of my congregation. Lockley smiled at my perplexity when I received it, and would give no other information than that it was a token of esteem to me from certain members of the Oregon Legislature, BECAUSE OF MY SHORT PRAYERS.

My prayers were short because I felt that the whole proceeding was more or less of a sham, and I have always been inclined to cut shams short. I knew that the legislators were there to do the business of the State, whether they did it or not. For that purpose they were paid, and not to hear my prayers. If they were men of sense and sound purpose they had no special need of any such formalism, and if they were not the for-

malism was of no value to them and only made the mockery of the whole situation a little worse. There is just as much reason for opening a factory with prayer every morning as there is for opening a legislature. If the service was paid for in either case the money would, in the last analysis, come out of the pockets of the common people.

The prayer was the first thing on the program each day. The minister sat beside the speaker of the assembly, or the president of the senate, by whom he was received with a courteous hand-shake and the polite suavity with which politicians delight to decorate the minister who is content to be a ritualistic figure-head and let the politician have his way in practical affairs. The spoilers of the public like to have ministers, and women, attend to their millinery. Politics are likely to stain the skirts of both of them, you know.

Although a little more inclined than the other ministers of Salem to discuss public affairs in the pulpit I was practically as innocuous as the rest of them, because equally ignorant with my brethren of the cloth of economic law. I knew the ship of state was a good deal of a failure in those days so far as the interests of all the people were concerned. I was inclined to blame the legislators then much more than I would blame them now. I can see now that neither the men who were praying for the Legislature, nor the men who were swearing at it, were going at the matter in a very sensible way. There were good men in that Legislature who were groping helplessly toward better things. There were some who were quite content to be the servitors of the special interests, and had the feeling that if the people were fools they might as well have the feathers. But most of them were as ignorant as I was of the way out of the wilderness, and because they were the chosen leaders of the people, and were blind, they were ditching the public from year to year worse than the criminals at the penitentiary or the crazies at the asylum. Well-intentioned ignorance is often more dangerous than evil-intentioned vice, and the wisdom that is not wise is more mischievous than the folly that is plainly foolish.

Joseph Simon of Portland was the president of the senate. An almost audible smile went around that body of legislators when I prayed for him in particular one day. It was a short prayer, not more than two sentences, and it was carefully worded so as to express genuine Christian goodwill, and to be as far removed as possible from any appearance of political or personal suggestion. Possibly the spectacle of a Christian minister praying publicly for a Jew had something to do with the humor of the hour for a few of those there. I suspect, howevre, that

it was the known political primacy of Simon at that time, and his good standing with all those forces in the State which ought to have been of bad standing with the people, that furnished the facetiousness of the occasion to those who were on the inside of public affairs. They were perfectly willing to have all the preachers in the State praying for their leaders as long as the profits of the leadership were not disturbed.

Years afterwards I preached before a certain college on the Pacific Coast which shall be nameless here. I dined with the faculty after the service. One of them was from Portland. I happened to mention Mr. Simon in connection with my experiences in Oregon and referred with no asperity to his part in the politics of Oregon at the time. The professor with whom I was talking bristled instantly, and expressed for him the highest personal regard. I could not question it, as my acquaintance with Mr. Simon was of the most casual kind, and the professor avowed an intimate personal contact with him covering many years. I had no disposition to question it. By that time I had learned that a little worse than a bad czar is a good one, and every abuse in the world hides behind personal virtue to much better advantage than when it is compelled to consent in its champions to open vice. Let those who can understand this parable understand it here; for others I shall repeat it in many forms before I am done with this story of how I came to understand it myself.

One of the Salem ministers who did not pray, in public anyway, for the legislators was M. V. Rork. I doubt much whether he prayed for them in private, except as he may have included all sinners in his universal good will. When he talked of them his words didn't have a very pious sound.

Rork was not a pastor in Salem then, although he had ministered, I think, to the Unitarian congregation there. He was of orthodox training, and, if I mistake not, had known some actual service in the orthodox ministry. At the time I was there he was a free lance and regarded very much askance by all the orthodox people. Most of them when they discussed him dismissed him as "erratic," which is a cheaper method of disposing of heretics, both religious and political, than the old-fashioned way of burning them, the way of the "oldtime religion," and state. I think some fagots could have been found for Rork's burning, however, if it had been according to law.

Rork did a little burning on his own account in the way of caustic speech. He was a brilliant fellow, whether he was erratic or not, and if I had known my opportunity better I would have fellowshipped him much more intimately than I did. I knew

all the "safe and sane" men of Salem, of whom there were altogether too many in those days. It was a few of the "fools" who saved the State. Rork was one of them.

Oregon was already restless in the rural districts by reason of the seed-sowing of such men as Rork. Here and there were groups of political fanatics who were the pioneers of the progressive philosophy which governs the State today. How Rork and his fellow agitators lived I do not know. Rork interested me a good deal, and amused me often. I had the attitude toward him inside of the man who prides himself on being "reasonably progressive," but on having sense enough to avoid all extravagances. I could praise him against those who damned him altogether, and, with a sense of virtue that was doubled by my championship of him and my own "better-balanced progressiveness," I could criticize him complacently at the same time. I have a choice assortment of friends of the same sort today.

I have forgotten all the Oregon politicians except one or two. Some of them got their names in "Who's Who," and I do not think that Rork's name has ever been there. Here and there a magazine of national prominence has recognized the fundamental work which he and a few of his fellows, some of them men of greater reputation now, did for self-government in the "Webfoot" State. "Web-foot" she may have been in those days, and there are some sneering scorners of real democracy who still would have it that she is a land of "quacks." I know of no State which has made nobler progress toward popular government and the recognition of the deeper meanings of democracy than has Oregon in the last twenty years. I wish I had helped more when I was there, and had dared more for the sake of the democracy which was already dawning in a few flaming eyes. But I was afraid of crimson colors then. Even Governor Pennoyer was more erratic than prophetic to me.

Pennoyer was a Democrat, and the State was inclined to be Republican He was not even an orthodox Democrat in those days. He was too progressive for his own party. I remember one of his stories, of which he told me many, was to this effect:

An Indian lost in the woods, was met by some friendly hunters who asked him solicitously, "Are you lost?"

"No, no," replied the Indian impatiently, "Indian not lost, wigwam lost."

It was not the Democratic Governor of Oregon who was lost in those days, according to his own opinion, it was the Democratic party. And most men of forward sense would admit today that Pennoyer was right.

He was a brilliant writer, and a capital story-teller. I liked to talk with him, and more than half way believed in him. But I was too "sensible" then to have sense enough to understand him. The common people received him as a prophet, and they had a measure of the prophet's reward, the measure being according to the measure of their faith. He died before his day had fully come.

The men who live largest in my memory of Oregon politics today are the men who lived nearest to the people, who had themselves the largest faith in plain human nature, and whom neither the churches, nor the schools, nor the political parties understood. They were both brainy men, and moral men, but "they came unto their own, and their own received them not."

CHAPTER XII.

The Religious Press.

I was a bare-footed, bare-legged, bare headed boy on the Iowa prairies, dressed principally all the summer long in freckles and fresh-air, when I made my first acquaintance with a religious newspaper.

Our home was one of the most hospitable homes on the prairies. My father could not turn even a tramp away. The result was some very interesting experiences for us youngsters, to whom a stranger was newspaper, drama, and social function all in one. Some of the sayings of the strangers who tarried with us over night are household words in the family to this day.

The tramps came oftener than the preachers. I think they interested me more in those days. They were more picturesque, more intimate, more human. They didn't put their hands on my head and talk solemn talk to me in the presence of my elders. Ministers were a decidedly awesome lot to me then.

There were compensations, however, even in the matter of visiting ministers, the chief of which was sized up very well in a little item that I read the other day. At a certain home where the visiting minister was eating dinner he asked for a second helping. Seeing the eyes of the small boy upon him, he remarked apologetically:

"I don't always have a dinner like this, Johnny."

To which the small boy promptly and illuminatingly replied:

"We don't, either."

Despite a certain note in this story to which every small boy will respond, I must confess that it was easier for me to get enough to eat during our days on the farm than it was for me to get enough to read. When, therefore, one of the visiting ministers persuaded my father to subscribe for a religious weekly he left a permanent memorial of his visit which meant vastly more to me than any passing improvement of our menu while he was there. I remember his name—Benedict—to this day, and the paper for which he took my father's subscription—the New York Examiner—was one of the formative forces of my youth.

The editor at that time, the Rev. Edward Bright, D. D., was an Englishman who had been long resident in this country. He was an editorial autocrat, whose pen was commonly keen and not always kind, but he had something to say and he knew how to say it. His style was worth more to me than the substance of what he said. His frequent tilts with the New York Independent over denominational affairs seem quite trivial to me now, but the trenchant way in which he went at it appealed to

all the partisan and the militant in me then. The Examiner did me good. I am not sure but that it did me quite as much harm. The Phariseeism of the religious press was more pronounced thirty-five years ago than now.

Fifteen years after I made my first acquaintance with a religious newspaper I began to write for one myself in a regular editorial way. It was during my ministry in Salem, Oregon, and the paper for which I wrote was born in the parsonage where I lived. The Rev. J. C. Baker, one of my predecessors in the pastorate there, was its founder and first editor. The paper had changed its name, and was published in Portland when I began my work on the Pacific Coast. There was another Baptist paper in San Francisco at the time, and yet another of much more sectarian emphasis published at Dayton, Wash., I think. They have all passed except the Portland paper, and that is published in McMinnville now.

A new editor took charge of this paper about the time that I went to Salem. He was an Oregon boy, of some size. His weight was above 250 pounds; he stood over six feet tall, and was one of the best proportioned men physically whom I have ever seen. Once, going along the streets of Rochester, N .Y., where he had studied years before, with his wife beside him, they passed two street urchins engaged in some game. One of them chanced to look up as he passed.

"Say, Bill, look there," he said, nudging his companion, "won't that fellow be a help to his mother when he gets growed up."

All in all, he has probably been the most helpful man to his denominational alma mater that our church on the Pacific Coast has produced. He made a good editor, although quite an ordinary writer. He has had but one pastorate, and that a small one, and is not a popular preacher. His strength is that of a counsellor, and as such he ought to have sat in the councils of the nation, or at least of the church universal, and not to have wasted his mental and moral resources doing errands for denominational devotees. One of the chief sins of sectarianism is that it uses draft animals to drive go-carts, and dynamos of unmeasured power to turn out toys. Both the nations and the churches are wasting the world's wealth at tremendous rate in keeping up standing armies which the world has outgrown.

I began to write editorials in October, 1891, and continued until the summer of 1899. During this period of nearly eight years I did not fail half a dozen times, I think, to turn out my weekly stunt of a full page. Besides these unsigned editorials I contributed a good many pages of general matter over my own

name. I gave up the work in 1899 both because the national Baptist anniversaries were coming to San Francisco in May of that year, and as missionary superintendent for Northern and Central California and Nevada I was too much occupied with preparations for that event, and for the deeper reason that I recognized I could no longer write with the freedom with which I had written before. I had dubbed the editorial page with this title, "FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW." But I was drawing away from much for which the paper stood, and had to stand to keep peace with its constituency, and I did not want to embarrass those who were responsible for its circulation with utterances which they could not easily either accept or refuse.

During the years that I wrote for the paper I neither asked nor expected any financial return. The paper was not able to pay. Its editor-in-chief, to whom I have referred, and who was supposed to live by it, got only $500 or $600 a year out of it. How he managed to live and raise a family on the meager and uncertain returns which he thus secured no one but himself and his thrifty wife knows. Those who starve to death for the sake of sectarianism, whether in the pulpit or the editorial chair, are not supposed to say much about it. There was a field editor also who had $600 a year, and who, through toilsome years of service which kept him continually traveling all over his immense province, from San Diego to Seattle and east to the easternmost edges of Montana, managed through labors really worthy of an apostolic cause to force the circulation of the little paper up to approximately 5000 subscribers. He was an Irishman, affable, lovable, capable, with the best traits of the race, and as devoted to our sectarianism as any Catholic could have been to his church. The sacrifices that go into the making of religious newspapers would be tragic, if they were not so often trivial in their results. Perhaps they are therefore more tragic, rather than less.

What I have said will make manifest, I hope, that the incidents which I am about to relate, and the judgments which I pass on the religious press, are neither the careless comments of ignorance, nor the indulgences of personal spite. There are no men with whom I have worked toward whom I feel warmer friendship to this day, or more of genuine personal regard, than the men with whom I was so long and closely associated in helping to make the paper which is now our only denominational organ on the Pacific Coast.

This was one of the humorous, and also pathetic experiences of those editorial days.

I wrote an editorial of some length, and of a good deal of

vigor, dealing frankly and fearlessly with patent medicines. The editor must have been very much rushed with other matters that week, or else his sense of humor was resting up, for in the very same issue in which my editorial appeared there appeared also in the center of the paper a full two-page advertisement of "Pink Pills for Pale People." It was the most conspicuous thing in the paper that week.

Someone who knew that I wrote the first page, a doctor, I think, clipped out my editorials and sent them to me, with the advertisement. I could only answer him with a good humored statement to the effect that I was not running the advertising pages. I might have said also that I was not dependent upon the paper for my livelihood, and that the editor very probably had no salary that week except what he got from advertising pills whose proprietors dealt with him more generously and justly than his subscribers.

I am not defending such advertising on the part of the religious press, and I am glad that most of the denominational newspapers are carrying little of it today. But they did not lead public sentiment at this point; they followed it, and in some cases very reluctantly. I blamed them more for it then than I do now, because now I see more clearly that it was primarily an economic question. Only we ought to be frank enough to recognize the fact that religious people cannot be most freely and effectively religious when the pay envelope is in the hands of the enemy.

A more subtle illustration of the same fact came later. This time my editorial had to do with a line of thought which is related closely to the whole purpose of these papers which I am writing now. I was trying to show that an institution may be thoroughly bad and yet the men who stand for it may be individually good, at least in a personal way. I wrote substantially as follows: "Slavery was an abomination, yet many of those who justified that institution were sincerely religious people, kind, honest, and lovable in a personal way. Likewise John D. Rockefeller may be wholly sincere in his piety, yet this does by no means justify the institution of which he is the head." I have no copy of the editorial now, and it is possible that I used the name also of the Standard Oil Company in a more definite way than I have given the quotation above. But this is, for all practical purposes, the substance of what I said.

Two things happened. When the editorial appeared Rockefeller's name had somehow been changed to Rothschild. In that case, the types themselves must have taken note of the fact that Rockefeller is a Baptist, and an American Baptist, on whom

our American missionary societies were drawing heavily at the time, and that the Rothschilds are only Jews, and foreigners. Besides, you see the point of the editorial was just as well preserved.

In spite of the thoughtfulness of the types there came to me a letter from a very indignant subscriber. He was a Southerner, resident in one of our chief California towns, and highly honored there as a judge, and as an honorable citizen. Those who knew him well tell me that he was personally a most excellent man. He wrote to tell me that he had stopped the paper, as he could not have any such teaching in his family. He denied seriously and earnestly that slavery was an abominition, defended the institution devoutly, and, though I wrote him in a kindly way, with mental recognition of the influence of his earlier environments, he would make no concessions on his side, and could not endure the idea that his denominational journal might incline his boys to such ideas.

On the sectarian side, the religious papers are quite puerile. The best of them are getting away from that sort of thing. Such magazines as The Outlook, and such papers as The Congregationalist are quite free from religious partisanship, and set the secular press a good example of intellectual dignity and open mindedness. The majority of the papers on which most of the more active members of the churches yet depend for direct religious guidance are still to a pitiful degree mere echoes of sectarian emphasis. They cater almost invariably to the conservatives, and not infrequently are the champions of the reactionaries, for the reason that their liberal subscribers will tolerate that sort of thing with good-natured contempt, while the reactionaries are quick to resent with open opposition any sign of progressiveness in the papers which they support. No papers are worse than the religious papers of the ordinary type, with respect to fawning upon the influential in their own circles. They toady continually to the ministers of the big churches, and the officials of the big denominational societies. They are slower than the yellow journals knowingly to misrepresent facts, but they are quite as unreliable in their silences, and the coloring which they give to facts. They are blind partisans to their own cause and often most pharasaically unfair in dealing with the other fellow. The yellow journals themselves are doing more for the cause of the common man today than is the religious press, with an honorable exception here and there. The religious papers generally understand labor about as well as Nicodemus understood Jesus. Socially, they are tremendously in need of being born again.

CHAPTER XIII.

An Evangelistic Church.

In July of 1893 I left Salem, very reluctantly, and accepted an unsought invitation to Oakland, Cal. The call of California to me was more than a matter of climate; it was primarily the promise of a larger opportunity in the larger town.

One incident in connection with our removal from Salem to Oakland is worth mentioning, for the light it throws on our present commercial methods. It cost us $19.75 to remove our household goods from Salem to San Francisco, a distance of 750 miles. They were loaded on the boat at Salem, went up the Willamette river, were transferred to the cars for the journey overland to the coast and then transferred to the boat again, and finally landed in San Francisco instead of on the Oakland side of the bay. It cost us an even $20 to get them carried across the bay to our home in East Oakland, a distance of not more than ten miles. A letter at the same proportionate rate would have cost us two cents to send it from Salem to San Francisco, and a dollar and a half to send it across the bay.

My first pastorate in Oakland lasted four and a half years. It marked the zenith of my ministry, so far as concerns those conditions which are commonly counted success. I had a sufficent salary, never large, but quite enough for our moderate needs. My denominational standing was first class, and I was in frequent demand for addresses at general religious gatherings. The newspapers paid very little attention to me, but always spoke of me approvingly when my name appeared. There were continual additions to the membership of the church—230 in all—of which nearly one-half joined us by direct confession of faith. We had the largest Sunday-school in East Oakland at the time, and my congregation often crowded the church to an uncomfortable degree. There was unity among us, and a tenderness of personal relations which makes it hard for me now to speak as openly and impersonally as I should.

One of the little girls of my congregation, a precocious child, was describing to me an aunt of hers who had just come from Worcester, Mass., and had not yet attended upon our services. To the lively amazement of the family, she wound up her praises of her pastor with this remark, said in her demurest fashion: "And, auntie, he is such a godly man." Another little girl, at a somewhat later period, was standing at the church doors when I came out. Her father pointed to me and asked her:

"Who is that man, Irene?"

To which, after a moment of hesitation, she answered:

"That's the man that goes wow wow."

I have often wondered of late years which of them described most accurately my first pastorate in Oakland. There is so much of what passes for spirituality which is little more than a repitition of a single strain of sound.

My preaching was conservative then, though I made less of theology than I did of the evangelistic appeal. This was the secret of such success as we had. I preached "the pure gospel," to use a current phrase which is as mischievously misleading as most cant phrases are, and every Sunday evening after the sermon I hald an inquiry meeting in more or less impromptu form.

There is no point at which the churches which we call orthodox are stronger, and weaker, than they are at the point of evangelism. This it is, even more than their social activities and their family atmosphere, which gives them their hold upon their members. Most of these members have come into the churches under the influence of evangelistic appeal, and the sound of that sort of preaching is to them like the music of childhood which stirs up memories of the tenderest emotional type. The results of such preaching when it is successful are immediate and obvious, and, despite the warning of Jesus that "the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation," most of us are impatient of results which we cannot see. Evangelism at its best is attended by transformations of character which are little short of miraculous, and to most people the sun coming out from under an eclipse is vastly more wonderful than the rising of the sun every day. There are no people who seek after a sign more assiduously than the Pharisees of all generations do.

"It's the cat that catches the mice that interests me," said a minister in my hearing some years ago. He was young, vigorous, resourceful, and especially eager for results. He has been a very successful ecclesiastical cat, if his own figure is to be allowed.

I was under the domination of the same idea in those days. Orthodoxy appealed to me principally because it got results, a large hearing, an abundance of religious activity, and a continuous supply of converts. I was very slow to see that spiritual forces cannot be autographed on cards of any kind, and that the movements of ideas which work their slow transformations of society are not tabulated on blackboards or in denominational reports.

There were some things about my success even then, how-

ever, which disturbed me a good deal. One of the chief of these was the popularity of my work, and all work of that type with men toward whom I felt an instinctive and irrepressible distrust.

They were good enough men in a personal way, too good indeed, for their personal excellence blinded many, as it blinded me at the time, to the mischief of the social methods and ideals for which they stood.

One Sunday morning I preached a sermon against pay entertainments in church. It accorded exactly with the feelings of the pious part of my membership, such as were satisfied with preaching and prayer-meetings and felt no need of getting together for just ordinary "good times," and the social converse of the wellloaded board. There were others present who made no objection to what I said, chiefly because I said it and because they were not quick at argument, who, after all, liked to get busy in the kitchen of the church, and enjoyed laughing with one another across the tables more than they did analyzing themselves in a semi-public way before a devotional meeting. When it came to every day living I am not sure now that the so-called devout had any advtntage over those whom they privately regarded as less pious. On the whole, the more normal men and women probably lived happier and more helpful lives.

There was present that morning a man who was not a member of our church and who attended only once in awhile. He was a man of large means, whose name was well known in big business circles around the bay. Exceedingly simple in his own personal tastes he was quite old-fashioned also in his ideas of religion, having the conservatism of the south, from which he came.

"I like to see a church have a little religion," he remarked one time by way of explaining his disinclination to attend regularly upon the more fashionable church to which his family belonged. He liked "spiritual" preaching, and evangelistic methods of work.

When the sermon was over that morning, he called to him our church treasurer, and, with a smile, handed him a check for $100.

"That's the kind of doctrine I like," he said.

Another time, on a Sunday evening, we were so crowded that we had to use the lower benches from the Sunday-school room on which the very little folks sat when it was their turn to be taught. On one of these sat that evening a man whom I instantly recognized as a large employer of labor, manager of the most unscrupulous corporation in San Francisco at the time. Our church treasurer, who was acting as usher also, offered him another and a better seat, but, with the bland smile

which was characteristic of him, he waived the offer aside and indicated his pleasure in seeing the crowded condition of the church for a straight evangelistic service by insisting upon sitting thus commonly among the common folks.

It was the same evening, if I mistake not, for he came several times, that he invited me to walk with him a far as the station, where we waited together till he took the local train. His conversation was quiet and deliberate, somewhat critical in a smiling way of churches in general, but warmly commendatory of the evangelistic methods which we were following. In a tentative way he suggested that San Francisco offered a larger field, and gave me to understand that if I would leave my Oakland pastorate and take hold of mission work in San Francisco he would do what he could to see that I had sufficient financial backing. Tentative and cautious as the proposition was there was every reason to believe he meant business and only waited my assent to get behind such a movement in a substantial way.

I repected both these men, but their preference for my procedure did not strengthen it in my mind. Even then I took Jesus' sayings about wealth too seriously to believe that moral vision is on the side of money. I had the feeling already in embryo that good work is not going to be everywhere well received, and that the favor of the well-to-do under ordinary social circumstances is not an altogether favorable sign. But it was not until years afterwards that I came to understand why it is that wealth looks with complacency upon church work of the "spiritual" and evangelistic type.

Yet I was beginning to wake up. I turned over uneasily on my own easy bed when someone reported to me that one of the members of the church, an old man of sober habits and industrious life but dependent now with his wife on an overworked and often underpaid young woman relative, had been actually seen fumbling over a garbage barrel at a neighboring store, kept by another of my members, in the effort to pick out some pieces of unspoiled fruit to take home.

I think my preaching was still evangelistic the next Sunday night. Both the church and the pastor were so set on "saving souls" that we had no time to develop a saving social sense just then. If the matter was mentioned among us we agreed that the misfortune was individual and unnecessary. It was too bad, of course, but what man needed was to "accept Christ." What I didn't see then was that the church itself had no idea of what the accepting of Christ actually involved, and if the proposition had been presented to them in all its breadth they would have shrunk from it with quicker repugnance than that excited by the garbage barrel. They were content with evangelism, and I was content with evangelism, though neither of us knew it, because evangelism is one of the easiest ways in the world of exciting

moods of "spiritual" self-satisfaction in your own mind and making an appearance of helping the other fellow without hurting yourself. Doubtless it has its place, and I still believe in the evangelistic mind when the terms are taken in their deepest sense. But much of that which passes for evangelism now is the substitution of playing with theology while we work between times at all sorts of social injustice between man and man.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Turn of the Road.

It was during my first pastorate in Oakland that the Rev. George D. Herron gave a series of lectures in that city in the large auditorium of the First Congregational Church. The audiences were the largest and most representative I have ever seen for lecturing of that kind in a Christian church.

Herron was then in good standing with the churches, although reckoned by many a dangerous radical. Years afterwards, sitting with one of the leaders of New England religious life at a dinner table in Boston, he said to me when George D. Herron was named:

"I sincerely hoped for awhile that Herron was to be the prophet of our generation."

Herron divorced his wife and married another woman. I do not know the merits of the controversy which raged over the matter. The minister who performed the second ceremony told me in confidence of conditions which, if exactly stated, must have very much modified the condemnation of Herron among religious people had the facts been generally known. This was long after I heard Herron in Oakland, of course, and on the same journey during which I dined with the Boston clergyman who voiced what had been undoubtedly the earnest expectation of many religious people.

Herron's standing with religious people was never better than it was when he made his visit to Oakland. Very few of those who heard him there, however, accepted his message. I was one of those who almost contemptuously set his sayings aside.

I remember asking him in one of the question periods which followed his lectures, with callow confidence in the profoundness of my own philosophy:

"How can you make a perfect society out of imperfect men and women?"

Herron treated the question with the indifference which it deserved. It would have been just as sensible to have asked Abraham Lincoln when he was about to sign the Emancipation Proclamation:

"How do you propose to set men free outside, Mr. Lincoln, who are not free inside'?"

The blacks are not all free since Lincoln freed them, but they are at least delivered from the huge injustice of that particular bondage by which the white man exploited their bodies

at the same time that he evangelized their souls. And the churches were pitifully slow to see that teaching negroes to sing, "I'm Glad Salvation's Free," was no justification before the eyes of an all-merciful Father for forcing them to kneel in bondage before the juggernaut of the white man's dividends. Every taskmaster in Christendom who grinds the faces of the poor would have approved the question which I asked that night. They are all willing to wait to see men individually converted if you will let alone the social injustice out of which they exploit their fellows.

It was the reading of a book which first seriously disturbed my shallow philosophy. The book was one that had been written many years before. It had been my father's in his later life, and he had passed it on to me almost as soon as he had read it himself. To him it was a gospel which warmed with its glow the sunset of his personal fortunes, and gave him hopes of a bright morning for the world when his own night was drawing near.

I do not know how it was I had failed to read it before, for it had been on the shelves of my library before I went to Mexico. Ministers spend so much time in intellectual mumbling over ancient texts, and are so tied up to scribal scrutinizings of dead languages, dead laws, and the literature of dead peoples that many of them find little opportunity to give serious heed to the great prophetic messages of the age in which they live. Most of our sermonizings are built on the model of the scribes who rejected Jesus, much more than they are on Jesus' method of talking about nature as he saw it and life as he found it every day.

It was when I had ceased the weekly preparation of two sermons for each following Sunday that I came to the reading which revolutionized my way of approaching truth and understanding life. The men who called me away from my Oakland church to go out and minister among the churches at large had in mind for me a kind of bishop's office, overlooking the smaller congregations especially and promoting new congregations of our sect in whatever portions of the State there was apparent need and opportunity. I visited the larger churches to collect missionary funds, and, with the co-operation of our "State Convention Board" I supervised the expenditure of these funds and the missionary moneys which we received from the East. At that time the denomination in the East gave us two dollars for every dollar which we raised ourselves.

Most of my work, therefore, was raising money, as even the churches which were helped were expected to help the board

in return. I could use the same sermon over and over again, as I had more than one hundred and thirty churches to visit. To a man who is intellectually lazy, that sort of a bishop's office may mean mental somnolence under the guise of administrative activity. Even the travel and the broader contact with men does not always compensate for the monotony of one's message and the habit of dealing either with dependents on the one hand or with donors on the other. Men of affairs, whether those affairs are commercial or ecclesiastical, are seldom progressive unless they use their intellectual leisure for much reading.

Fortunatey for me I read, and read omniverously, when I was set free from the pressure of immediate pulpit preparation. One of the first books which I read, whose title I have thus far withheld, was "Progress and Poverty," by Henry George. I followed it with "Equality," by Edward Bellamy, and "Socialism and Social Reform," by Prof. Richard T. Ely of the University of Wisconsin then for some years. These were but introductory volumes, but they impressed me more definitely than any other half dozen which followed.

Only one of these books is written from the Socialist point of view, "Equality," and that belongs rather to "Nationalism" than to the larger industrial revolutionism of our time. Both Henry George and Richard T. Ely are critics of the Socialist philosophy. Yet their concessions, and their criticisms of the present order, did more to make me a Socialist than the direct advocacy of the Socialists themselves.

Two things I recognized then which are at the bottom of my thinking today. One is the law of evolution covering the whole field of life. The other is the influence of economic environment in determining the directions in which men have moved.

It was during the days of my missionary superintendence and while I was still resident in Oakland that I joined the Ruskin Club. This was a group of Socialist "intellectuals," including a fair proportion of both professional and business men, with a very few of those who are commonly dubbed workingmen. It was not the least snobbish, however, and its point of view was emphatically that of the working class.

The largest service of the Ruskin Club to me was that I met there men who had neither any deference nor any antipathy toward the ministry. They were more consistent than most Socialists in that they recognized with perfect courtesy the economic environment of the minister, and neither blamed him nor excused him for it, but tried to understand him just where he stood. At the same time their intellectual size made the

small "tatting work" of the ministry look like the light work that it is for a real man.

Once, years later, when I was pastor again in Oakland of the same church which I had served before, I preached one night on baptism. It was a statement in dispassionate form of the ritualistic contentions of my people, and I know now that I had not very much heart in it. Quite unexpectedly, a group of the "Ruskin" men were there. They listened with perfect courtesy, and made no sign of dissent from anything I said. But I felt, and am not ashamed to admit it now, as if I had been caught playing with dolls.

Twice within a period of three years I visited Southern California. The first time was while I was yet in my first Oakland pastorate. I went by special invitation to the meeting of the "Southern California Convention" at San Diego, and gave one of the addresses. I said nothing in particular, and it was very cordially received.

My second visit was made when I was missionary superintendent. I was one of the special speakers at the first meetings of the "Assembly" at Long Beach.

"We want a real message," said the young minister who wrote me. "Give us something on the social line, and give it to us straight from the shoulder."

I wondered, and went.

My message was on "The Unrighteousness of Our Present Social Order." I did not mention Socialism. I argued quietly and smilingly for an hour these four propositions: (1) Any order of society is wrong which allows the private appropriation of public property. This was an argument for the common ownership of natural resources. (2) Any order of society is wrong which allows the strong to appropriate the earnings of the weak. This was an exposition, shall I say an expose, of our wage system. (3) Any order of society is wrong which compels men to compete for the necessaries of life. This dealt frankly with the waste and woefulness of the "battle for bread." (4) Any order of society is wrong which puts the emphasis of human endeavor on the material side of life. This was an exhibit of the inevitable materialism of our present order, and a plea for that order and decency which would give opportunity for a really spiritual social life.

The address closed the doors of practically every Baptist church in Southern California to me and left me anathema south of the Tehachapi to this day. Yet our Baptist fathers were the revolutionaries of the revolutionaries in their day, and died for no ritualistic form but for a larger and finer freedom of faith.

So does every sect, born of a religiously revolutionary passion, forget the big human logic of its birth in the worship of some subsequent and incidental letter of its creed.

"I know the ministers who are reading," said the foremost book-seller in San Francisco to me about that time. "I know the men who are reading," he repeated, "and it is the men who are not reading who are conservative."

The meaning of this also the literalists will miss. It might have been said better, perchance. It is not just the men who are not reading who are not progressing. It is rather the men who are satisfied with their reading, and who want to read nothing else. It is the men whose intellectual "good" which they learned years ago has bred in them a satisfaction which prevents them from going on to something better.

Socialism did more for me than to give me a new creed; it humanized all my thinking. It humanized the origins of all the creeds, and all the churches, and gave me with liberty against the letter of any of them a larger sympathy with the fundamental life which is working itself out through all of them. It did not make me a new partisan; that I have always refused to be, even when I have worked with the Socialist party. I am still a Socialist more after the manner of the Ruskin Club than after the iron-clad political Calvinism of any dogmatic local. Socialists, like other people, are continually tumbling over their own virtues. Their "good" is more dangerous to them than their bad. The trouble is not so much with any of our labels as it is with our exclusiveness toward all labels except our own. This is the mischief of our good, whether it is intellectual or moral, that it will not let us see how much more good, and yet more good, there lies beyond .

CHAPTER XV.

The Religion of a College Town.

It is told of the famous Dutch scholar, Hugo Grothus, that, when a friend admired his great industry, he replied. "Ah, I have consumed much of my life in laboriously doing nothing."

One of the heavy tasks of my missionary superintendency was the raising of a lot of money from a lot of poor people for a quite unnecessary new church building at Palo Alto. When I closed my work as missionary superintendent, to my own surprise I became pastor of the Palo Alto congregation.

My Palo Alto pastorate lasted only one year. I had been there but four months when my wife passed on beyond the great silence. My life that year was further broken by three other deaths within the same family circle. The kindness of the whole Palo Alto community to me in that crisis I can never forget.

Before my wife's death my ministry was already disturbed. I went to Palo Alto with the purpose to try out some new methods of church work and a freer type of pulpit teaching. There seemed to me even at that time slight justification for any enlargement of mere sectarian expenditure in Palo Alto, or any like place, unless the newcomer contributed some distinctive service of real consequence to the Christian cause. We tried, therefore, a combination of the Sunday-school and the morning worship, and I spoke at all times from the pulpit with regard to making the most in a careful way of the new liberty which had come to my own life.

The new methods were accepted without complaint. The new message, although more moderated to the people than the changed order of work and worship, provoked instant protest which even the after tenderness of our tears together could not overcome.

I found two distinct attitudes in Palo Alto toward the university and the whole modern mood of mind for which it stood. There were a few who frankly rejoiced in it, and would have had the churches rise to their intellectual opportunity and enter into the new Canaan of broader religious conceptions. The majority in the orthodox churches, however, were decidedly conservative, and many regarded the students in the university as in very seriout peril of going far astray from the safe confines of their childhood's faith. For one class, the smaller class by far, the function of the Palo Alto churches of all denominations was the readjustment of faith among their followers to the terms of modern

thought. To the other class, the older people especially, and those who had never been intellectually young, the students were brands to be plucked from the burning.

The conservatives were responsible in the first place for the building of so many sectarian churches in Palo Alto, and it is the conservatives there and everywhere else who are responsible for the continued waste of sectarianism today. The tragedy of it is that the worship of the letter is always at the ultimate cost of the big human values of life.

One Sunday morning, talking about the Genesis stories, I used this illustration: I held a five-dollar goldpiece in my hand, and said: "This is not pure gold; there is some alloy in it. But it is better for the purposes of circulation that it is so; and, inasmuch as the coin has the stamp of the Government upon it we accept it readily as legal tender."

"Likewise," I continued, "these old Genesis stories are not pure fact. There is doubtless some alloy of tradition here. But the stamp of a divine revelation is upon them and they are all the better for purposes of circulation because of the simple story elements which are there."

This careful and really conservative illustration brought me a letter from one of the chief officers of my church denouncing me for destroying the Bible and withdrawing his own support. He was a good man, whose goodness made his mistakenness of mind more mischievous for him.

In place of the morning doxology, which I do not remember to have found in any version of the Bible, we adopted the custom of singing at the opening of the service one of the old songs of the church universal. That which we used most commonly was "Nearer, My God, to Thee." One winter afternoon I remember that my wife sat apart in a cold room that I might have privacy for an hour with an old lady who had especially asked for a private interview. She was from Boston, and the family had professional connections. In careful language and in kindly tones, and with the express disclaimer of the desire to trouble me, she labored with me at great length, nevertheless, to prove to me the peril of our young people through the use of that hymn. The sum of its offending was that "Nearer My God to Thee" was written by a Unitarian.

Another woman, one of the best of my congregation, still in the prime of life and long active in Christian service, confessed to me that she had lain awake worrying all night because I had ventured to suggest that the story of David and Goliath was an illustration of the tendency of hero stories to gather around some central heroic character. There is another text than that which

is commonly received in which the exploit of killing Goliath seems to be attributed to one of David's men.

These were all good people, but they did not want the truth except as it harmonized with their traditions. It is the good people of the world who keep most of its lies alive. And so long as molehills of ritual and dogma are larger in the eyes of the religious than are mountains of human helpfulness the stupidness of our sectarianism will go on.

There were few ministerial students in Stanford that year, but there were men among the brightest and best in the university who had been headed for the ministry and had turned aside because they could not stomach that sort of thing. More serious yet was the fact that a much larger number of the best men in the great school refused to take religion seriously for the ordinary work of the world to which they were going, because the "good" people whom they knew were in a really human way so little worth while.

And yet the ministers in Palo Alto that year were a fine lot of fellows. Most of them would have been glad to be less sectarian if the denominational machine behind them would have allowed them to be so. They did a lot of real work in spite of the unreality of the paltry contentions for which their distinctive boundary lines stood. The churches that employed them did not realize fifty per cent on their actual values because they would not suffer them to be free.

The church in Salem brought me more or less into contact with the Methodist school there known as Willamette University. My church in Oakland was closely related to our own Baptist college. The year in Palo Alto was followed not long afterward by a year which I spent as a member of the faculty of the University of Nevada at Reno. I think I may claim, therefore, to know a little about the atmosphere both of the big schools and of the ordinary college town.

There is much about such an atmosphere of a tonic quality, and it has a peculiar delightsomeness of its own. The presence of so many young people is stimulating in itself, and the mood of inquiry, however, "cabined, cribbed and confined" by conventions of one sort and another is a mood which makes for enlargement of life. On the social side also the schools have much that is attractive to offer.

Yet nowhere have I felt the limitations of goodness more than I have in centers of supposedly intellectual life. Nowhere is there less understanding of the common man. If the churches sacrifice the human to their creeds, the schools sacrifice the human to their "culture." The theological conservatism of the one

is offset by the sociological conservatism of the other. The professor's chair is freer than the pulpit concerning the things for which sectarianism cares, but the pulpit is freer than the professor's chair concerning the things for which capitalism cares. In neither case is there the freedom that there ought to be, and in both instances there is lack of the rich red blood of life. Both pulpit and professor's chair represent a goodness which is enemic in the presence of the bigegst issues of the hour.

Neither our schools nor our school towns are really democratic. They do not know the feel of the pulse of the poor. There are exceptions, of course, in an individual way—splendid exceptions—and from these come the most formidable leaders of revolt. But they are outcasts among their own class. Generally speaking revolutions come from the bottom upwards, and the bulk of intellectual influence is one the side of social injustice and customary wrong. The scholars of his day did not follow Jesus as a rule, and there is grave reason to suspect that the one or two who did had much to do with turning Christianity aside.

No goodness is harder to thoroughly save than the goodness of the college town. It is clean, nice-spoken, courteous, well-dressed and Laodicean through and through. Lukewarmness is the favorite pose of culture. The "passion for men" is not a product of polite society. It was Henry George, not a college man, who voiced the most memorable expression of the deepest devotion of our age, "I am for men." And it was Dwight L. Moody, free from the formalism of the schools, who broke with his mighty enthusiasm the wine-skins of conventional religion a generation ago.

Palo Alto has suffered less than ordinary from the enemy of culture by reason of the big humaneness of the man who has led its university. He is a California monolith whose rock substance is tender as a child's flesh, and whose veins are warm with a genuine flow of life. He will be remembered less for his scholarship tomorrow than for the part which he has played in promoting the cause of the common man. If the university were as forwardly human as he is, there would be a stronger stirring of "the wind before the dawn" through all the broad reaches of our fairly human state. There is a vast amount of goodness in our schools which it is impossible yet to call really good.

CHAPTER XVI.

A Come-Outer in San Francisco.

The majority of the church in Palo Alto would have had me remain when my year was done, and there was no open opposition to me in a local way. But because the church property had been built largely by moneys contributed in a special way by churches all over the State, and because I was myself maintained while there, in part, by a special denominational appropriation, I did not feel as free as I would have in the case of a self-supporting church. Besides, I was weary of sectarianism and wanted to try some work outside of the lines. So I joined a few of my own mood in the effort to establish an independent work in San Francisco.

We called ourselves "Christian Comrades." There was no creed among us, and no church organization. We kept our membership individually wherever it happened to be and advised those who came to us to do the same. It was not another denomination which we sought. Of that we were, if anything, too much afraid. All that we wanted was a chance to give in San Francisco a free Christian message in the most untrammeled way.

Our experience in a financial way reminds me now of the story of the man who remarked to a friend:

"You see that man over there? Well, twenty years ago he began business in this town with nothing but a borrowed basket."

"And now?" inquired the friend expectantly.

"He still owes for the basket," was the laconic reply.

We owed nothing when we got through in San Francisco, because we did not borrow, but we never got beyond the basket with which we began.

Our intention was to support ourselves with our hands and spend all our spare time in an unpaid ministry. There wasn't any spare time for most of us. And even then to make a living those of our company who had families to support had to get out of town. We had no capital of our own, and we were determined that we would not ask favors of those who had, lest we limit the liberty of our social message. The experiment lasted three months and then we were starved out.

Part of my Sundays I spent in going about and making a study of the other come-outers in the town. It was not a very inspiring experience. Generally speaking, the meetings were small and were a little more lifeless than the churches. I wound up on Palm Sunday by attending the services at St. Luke's Episcopal church. I thoroughly enjoyed it. Ritual commonly is too

luxurious for my temperament. But I felt like one who has been out all day for a cold drive and I wanted a warm room.

Nothing is more mistaken than the notion that truth is the mere denial of that which is false, or that good consists in a simple abstinence from that which is bad. Both truth and goodness are vital and never merely of a negative character. If there is any choice between them I think the Sadducees, those who simply deny superstitions, are a little less to be desired than the Pharisees who are at least warm-blooded enough to want to affirm something. The Lord deliver us from a steady diet of negatives.

It is odd, too, how easily men can mistake their perception of the failure of other people's goodness for the growth of goodness in themselves. None are so useless as those who only know how useless other people are.

We failed because we would neither fawn nor fight. We did not propose to toady to San Francisco's money, and we were not there to increase misunderstanding and ill will. The churches would not let us speak unless we spoke their shibboleths, and those who curiously came to hear us did not care to come again unless we would blow up and burn up shibboleths for them all the time. I could have found a platform had I been willing to give the social message alone, but I wanted to give the religious message too.

There is more to that last remark than appears. Most men who are saying good things in public are saying them with a tacit agreement not to say a lot of other good things. They may not be conscious of the agreement, or they may deny it, but it is there. Give the religious message, even in a "liberal" pulpit, and you must muzzle most of the social message which needs to be said. The theological liberals are a well-fed lot, and they hold a good share of the box seats when the pie is going around. You can say a lot of good things to them theologically, but you have to be "good" in a much more submissive way when you would talk downright democracy to them. If "Silence and Health" contained as much radical sociology as it does radical psychology half the Christian Science churches would be empty next week.

But before the social radicals applaud this at the expense of the theological progressives let me say with equal candor that they also put the mouthpiece between the teeth of their talkers. Many of them will prate of the narrowness of the churches who cannot bear to have a man utter a word of his honest religious convictions on one of their platforms, though it be said with not the slightest desire to force another man's thought. When they are supposed to be talking economics they will themselves drag in philosophic materialism by the hour. Let another man em-

phasize the spiritual in the broadest fashion, and, though he may have left all to follow economic righteousness itself they will sneer at him as a "come-to-Jesus" deceiver of the people. There are none who need more to make way for other people's good than those who are sure that they have got a monopoly on the latest brand themselves.

Bad people can make way for other kinds of badness. It is good people who find it hard to believe in any goodness, either intellectual or moral, except their own. I have found only one or two platforms yet where I can say all my message with all my heart. Such a platform, however obscure, is worth a fortune a week.

My most interesting ministry during those months in San Francisco was with one man, and he a prisoner.

He was a boyish looking fellow, about 21 years of age, with an appearance so prepossessing that those who knew best how untrustworthy he was nevertheless could not keep themselves from trusting him. I knew prisoners and prison life too well to overestimate the chances of reform, but I think this boy was absolutely the most discouraging case that I ever met.

He was the product of a good home. Both his father and mother, whom I came to know well, were sincerely religious, and as simple as could be in their lives. The father was the picture of sedate trustworthiness and held a responsible position of a semi-public character. The mother was a literalist, both in her religious views and her morality, but of kind spirit, besides being of exact life. There was another boy in the family who was a respectably model young man.

This boy, the younger, had left a trail of crime half the length of the Coast and more when I met him. He made not the slightest effort to deny it after denial was useless, and made no pretenses of penitence. He had simply played the fool, to use his own language, and he didn't know why.

With the help of one or two others I got him out of prison after six weeks there, and took him to my own home. The first thing that he wanted before he would go into the house was a bath. He was niceness itself in his personal ways. I got him a place in the Government service. He held it a few months, and did the thing over again, worse than before. Then he went to the penitentiary, but for two years instead of fourteen, through the fatherly interest of the Judge. When he came out I took him into my home in Oakland, where he stayed till I got him work again, this time also in a public institution.

I read the riot act to him then. "This is your last chance, so far as I am concerned," I said. He swore by all that was holy

to be good. He was for six months. Then he stole again. I refused at first to see him. Then I thought again, and again got him a place. After the very first time I had been perfectly frank with those who took him. A friend in San Francisco, with a marvelous fund of faith in his fellows, took him in, and treated him as trustingly as an own son. The young fellow betrayed the trust almost as quickly as it was given. Then we let him go.

Strange to say, the last I knew of him he had married and settled down to a decent life.

There was this other strange fact to his credit. Although he had two or three times the free run of our home there was never anything missing. Yet he confessed that when the mood was on him he was helpless and that there had been circumstances of larger trust toward him when the communion table itself could not hold back his hands.

I studied his badness a good deal. I think now it was rooted in the defective goodness of those around him. His people were people of the "saving" type, not parsimonious, I think, but painstakingly careful of the pennies which came their way. He drank in thriftiness with his mother's milk and learned the importance of money on his father's knee.

The church which taught him to worship God also taught him, without knowing it, a more immediate worship of money. Its very minister had his title from a small school to which one of the principal members of the same church had given $500 but a very little while before. The connection between the two events, the giving of the money and the getting of the degree, was a joke among the ministers of the denomination beyond the boundaries of the State. It was a well-to-do church, built upon lines of the conventional primacy of the pocketbook so long as the money was gotten in conventionally respectable ways.

There was the trouble with the boy. He had not learned to take what belonged to other people in legitimate ways. He was for direct action, and indirect ways of getting other people's goods have always been more respectable. Also in him the desire for life's comforts and conveniences was not evenly distributed over his days, but sometimes congested in the form of impulses which were too strong for a naturally flabby will. Had he consumed his years with one long, steady pull to get rich, so that there was nothing left of him but a heart of stone covered with a skin of parchment it would have been forgiven him even by the church if he had been successful within the very loose limits of the law.

I am not excusing him, nothing of the kind. He suffered and his nearest friends could not keep him from being burned when he insisted upon putting his hands on the stove to see whether it was as hot as before. "Sin and its punishment grow on the same stem." But the goodness around him had never gripped him. I suspect that was so because it had never gripped hold of God very profoundly at the other end. It was afraid of reality, and so its unreality showed up big when it found a weak wire in him. The bad would be too amazed to be bad if the good were once to get busy and be actually good.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Morals of Moderation.

Less than half a dozen years ago I sat in his own study with the well-known minister of a well-known church of another denomination in one of the northern towns of California. We talked with utmost freedom along theological lines and with entire harmony. Before I left him he remarked with a smile:

"Well, I agree with you practically in all your positions, but it wouldn't be good policy for me to say these things in my pulpit."

The same remark almost to the letter was made to me in my own study here in Los Gatos a year or so later by a neighboring pastor of my own denomination. Only, in the latter case, there was much pronounced criticism of my own open methods of teaching.

I can call to mind offhand now within the circle of my acquaintance in Northern California half a dozen ministers, representing three or four of the leading evangelical denominations, who have made like admissions to me, though perhaps not in just so many words.

There are many who will seize upon this statement of the situation to condemn the ministry wholesale for it.

"Ministers are not preaching what they believe," these will say. "We have long felt so, and here is one who is frank enough to set forth the facts."

Many conservative Christians in the churches will join in the complaint of insincerity and will use my admission against the very progressivenese for which I stand.

"Liberalism does not make for honesty," these will contend.

Which reminds me of the old sea captain who heard a schoolboy declaim Tennyson's famous lines on "The Charge of the Light Brigade!"

"Half a league, half a league, half a league onward!" recited the boy. But the captain, in the confidence of his nautical knowledge and utterly void of imagination, blurted out:

"The old fool! If he meant a league and a half, why didn't he say so "

There are no fools like the literalists, whether they are inside or outside of the churches. People who have no imagintion are always stumbling into absurdities over their own wooden logic.

It is hardly necessary to say that I stand now for the open course. I do not believe that policy is the best honesty, whether honesty is the best policy or not. But I have found it better

to try to understand men than I have to condemn them. And the course which these men are pursuing I think I understand because I tried it myself once on a time.

It was during my second pastorate in Oakland, with the same church which I had served before. I was with them the first time about four and a half years, the second time fourteen months less. The second pastorate was on the face of it more successful than the first. The congregations were larger, often overflowing the much larger church building. My support was more liberal by several hundred dollars a year. The additions to the membership were many. The denominational press gave me the most flattering and fallacious write-up I ever had.

The call to this second pastorate was a compromise, in which affection prevailed over discretion on both sides. They knew that my thinking was not what it had been years before, but their inquiries were incidental and they trusted me to make no trouble where we disagreed. I knew that their thinking had changed, and that they were resolved not to change, and I trusted my head to find a way in which we could work together in love.

"Religion is not a matter of definitions, old or new; it is a life. That which I held yesterday has passed as to its form, but the form of what I hold today will also change. Why, then, contend over the incidental? Let us rather talk of the big things of character and conduct together, and let me lead them gradually to see that reality is not dependent upon form."

This program was, as I have indicated, an apparent success. As a matter of fact, it was a failure from the first on both sides.

"I suppose I ought not to say it," remarked a woman to me in the midst of that second Oakland ministry, "but there is something about your preaching which makes me feel that you are not quite sincere."

She was not a member of the church, and she was eccentric besides. But she knew me better than I knew myself just then, and, although I winced under her words, they did me good.

I am not judging others in this confession even at this point. I only know that the effort to conceal my convictions in what I dubbed minor matters was a continual crucifixion to me. I could not give myself to the church with perfect freedom, and they could not accept what I said without restraint. We kept ourselves from outward contention, but we kept our-

selves from the most intimate co-operation at the same time.

It was during that particular pastorate that a brother minister on the same side of the bay put his problem before a group of his fellow ministers.

"There is a woman in my church," he said, "whose husband is a saloonkeeper. She is an excellent woman, and I enjoy ministering to her and to her children. You all know what I think of the saloon, and that I have no use for it. But if I come out in my pulpit and denounce the liquor traffic I shall lose this woman and her family from the congregation. Isn't it better to lead her on quietly and give her the message in part than it is to drive her away from my ministry altogether?"

The unanimity with which his proposal of moderation at this point was refused was interesting and illuminating to me.

"There can be no excuse today for any compromise with the saloon," was the unanimous verdict.

"A moral issue," many will say. And it is not a moral issue whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch or not, or whether David was the author of certain psalms or somebody else. Then why say anything about these things if the saying of it makes trouble?

Why, indeed, except that the issue between modernism and medievalism is much more than a matter of the authorship of books, or portions of books. It is the conflict between formal and spiritual authority, between the cage of the letter and the boundless atmosphere of life. But whether this definition of the difference is accepted or not it is plainly in a personal way the issue of whether a man shall be free to speak all his soul or not. If he is consciously keeping something back and is trying to persuade himself that it is not important because he cannot utter it, there is a moral issue involved.

Can goodness profit by the sacrifice of frankness? I tried to think so then. I cannot think so now.

Most ministers who pursue the course of partial silence are doing so neither from mercenary motives nor because of any conscious cowardice.

They are doing so in what they believe to be the interests of a larger good.

"It is better to say what we can say and be allowed to say and be allowed to say it than it is to say all that we would say and be refused the right to say anything at all. Better a ministry with some minor silences than to lose our ministry or wreck it in contention at last."

It is so they reason, and it is so that many of the finest fellows in the ministry hold to conscious sincerity with a conscious consent to the withholding of much which they would like to say. Those who think them dominated by the dollar or by a timid spirit do them wrong.

Yet I believe their reasoning is mistaken and mischievous in a high degree. The one proposition to which I am continually returning in this confession is that the half good is the most dangerous enemy of the good. It is for this I have written, not to either exhibit or justify myself. Because I have come to it through years of personal travail, I am telling this truth in a personal way. The half good, whether of faith or of deed, is that which we mean when we talk of good-open unbelieving of the world which is the chief impediment to better thinking and to better life.

ness, and it is that more than the open misconduct on the

It is neither the open sins nor the open insincerities of men which we have most need to fear. It is the goodness which stops short of being good, and the truthfulness which stops short of being altogether true.

A word more at this point. When a man for the sake of harmony in larger matters consents to play a part in small matters it is the small matters which are emphasized in the mind of the one who has forced the concession upon him. The only way to lead men out of the letter is to refuse to walk with them in it yourself.

One evening in that second ministry in Oakland I sat up late in my study talking with two of the leading men of the congregation. The question which we discussed till after 10 o'clock that night was this: How could Ralph Waldo Emerson be saved inasmuch as he did not believe in the deity of Jesus Christ?

Both of these men are in the prime of life. They are intelligent fellows, as the world goes. But with all my efforts to explain that a man's salvation is not something external to him, but is the actual status of his moral health, and that the relation of Jesus to our salvation is not one of intellectual definition on our part, but of vital correspondence with him in spiritual experience and attitude, these men in their devotion to dogma could not see how Emerson, with all his acknowledged excellence, could possibly have been saved.

Some time afterward one of these men appeared before a certain legislative committee at Sacramento to protest on behalf of his employers against the eight-hour law for women.

The womanhood of the factory for which he spoke is to a considerable extent a girl-womanhood of a very immature and impoverished sort.

Yet I speak of his action here not with reference to the single act itself, nor with regard to the special circumstances of that particular situation. I have used the incident simply to show the manner in which good men may so misplace the emphasis of their thinking as to make their very goodness a social menace and offense. To live in theological abstractions or personal pieties and proprieties when one ought to live in the forward movements of the race is to make one's personal excellencies more dangerous than the personal deficiencies of another man who has the more serviceable public spirit.

And men are not going to be helped to right thinking by the evasive silences of their teachers. You cannot stop grown men from playing with dolls by joining them in their play. Only an absolutely honest man can help other men to be as honest as they have need to be. If you are going to lead your fellows into the light the first requirement is that you shall walk in all of the light that you have yourself. Being silent about even small convictions is no way to breed big convictions in others.

It was because in my own experience I became sick of all compromising silences before my people, and because I determined that for myself I must be first of all a man, whether I remained a minister or not, that I left Oakland and all thought of another pastorate for a time. My tilt with the authorities in Oakland, of which I am about to speak, had nothing to do directly with the closing of my pastoral service there.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Where Crime Begins.

One event of my second pastorate in Oakland it is impossible to pass without mention here, although I have no desire to stir up heart-sickening memories in others, nor to dwell at length upon my own limitations of social understanding at the time. But the experience brought vividly before me the futility of our present punitive attitude toward crime, and opened up to me in a startling way the social origins of much of the individual offending which we stupidly insist upon treating in a purely individual way.

A young man of my congregation, one of exceptionally lovable personality, was murdered for the money that was on him, under circumstances of peculiar atrocity. I was on my vacation at the time at Lake Tahoe, was called home just before he died and it fell to me to bury him. It proved to be that he had been killed by certain boys of the neighborhood who had gone on from one phase of rowdyism to another until their lawlessness ended in this ruthless act. They had not intended the death of their victim, but they showed themselves inhumanly indifferent to the consequences for him in order to possess themselves of his money.

There had long been a degree of rowdyism in our neighborhood which was more than a neighborhood disgrace. Even after this culminating crime the disturbed conditions continued far into the fall and winter months. Police protection was inadequate and reports were frequent of offenses on the streets at night which threatened a repetition of the affair, or worse. There were circumsances in connection with the prosecution of the offenders in this particular case, and their associates in much previous and hitherto unpunished lawlessness, which did not contribute to calm the public mind in our part of the city.

I dealt with the matter from my pulpit at first in quite an individual way. It was evident enough that the boys themselves were not wholly to blame, but I went no farther than did most others in the neighborhood at the time, and was content to seek the cause in the want of proper discipline and education at home. It gave me an opportunity to say some very plain things to other parents of the neighborhood whose children were in danger of traveling the same road. I was especially severe on the willingness of fathers and mothers to defend their offspring against a reasonable disciplinary au-

thority in school and other public places, and to take their part whether they were right or not. So far as I touched on the social aspects of the matter at all, it was to insist that a man ought to hold the public welfare above partiality for his own child, and that he ought not to defend even his own flesh and blood against a just punishment for crime.

I preached a series of sermons on "The Boy Problem," and by special request followed these with a second on "The Girl Problem." Their style was more sensational than I would make them now. The people responded with the largest attendance the church had ever known. One of the newspapers exploited many of my more epigrammatic sayings, and, although there were minor criticisms on the part of conservative members, the popular success of my methods and the persuasion that my arrows were pointed in the right direction, whether they were too much feathered or not, gave me the cordial support of my congregation as a whole.

It was shallow work as I see it now. That which followed was a little deeper, but it was far from sounding the depths. I was looking in the direction from which the trouble came, but I had need to see a good deal further yet.

As I had said some very plain things about parents before, I said some very plain things about the city and about civic government now. In neither case did I speak as conservatively and judicially as I might have done. But there was need of plain words from some one, and I was stirred to the heart with the outrages which had happened and with the prospect of more.

Sensationalism in a preacher, as long as it follows individual lines, is seized upon approvingly by even the paid and kept press. Let him touch the sources of social corruption and those who profit by it will at once take the alarm. That portion of the press in Oakland which had grown fat on graft and which has been ever since the consistent defender of indecency on both sides of the bay, was at once stirred up against me and proceeded to stir up the authorities to a course of procedure, which, however it may have seemed to discredit me, was of no particular credit to themselves.

Looking backward at the matter after the lapse of years, and after I have come myself to more moderate faith in the efficiency of mere police methods, I have no desire to conceal my own fault. I spoke in terms too sweeping at the time. The information which I had received was confidentially given and could not be publicly used. Good people who ought to have been willing in the interests of the public wel-

fare to tell what they had told me were constrained by personal timidity or economic interest to keep silence, and I could not in honor so much as mention their names. I was therefore put in the position of having said publicly what I could not with legal evidence publicly maintain.

Having said this much sincerely about my own course I am bound to say with equal sincerity that the methods of the authorities were as mistaken as my own. How much sincerity there was back of them I do not know, and I am not disposed to raise that issue now. There was vastly more of the spectacular on both sides than there should have been. Had the authorities tried as hard to uncover the crookedness in civic affairs as they did to cover themselves against public accusation they could have justified the substance of all that I had said and could have served the community to much better effect.

That this was so, one incident toward the close of the matter proved. When my friends had failed me and the good people of Oakland stood in silent acquiescence while the formal evasion of the facts went on a man from the underworld came to me and proffered his help. He made no pretense of any high public motives, but he was willing if need be to allow me the use of his name. It was not necessary. That which he had told me was easily proved. Within a stone's throw of the very room in which the Grand Jury sat when they formulated their clearance of the city's character against what I had said was one of the worst brothels of the town, which was doing not only its own lawless business in open contempt of the authorities of the city, but was selling liquor after midnight hours, an offense explicity against the law. This I proved by sending men one Saturday evening to make personal investigation, and these investigators were ready with any public proof which might be required. The woman who ran this resort was at the same time living in one of the well-known hotels of Oakland in open adultery with one of the clerks of the Superior Court.

I said so openly from my pulpit, withholding both his name and hers, but offering to give them to any authorities of the city who would call upon me for them. There was a flurry of talk in the papers and on the streets the next day, and certain of the authorities loudly proclaimed their intention of calling upon me at once for the proof. They never did. The guilty man stayed away from his desk for some days, but although he thus betrayed his identity he suffered no harm in an official way. Nearly two years later, in the summer of 1907, while I was traveling in the East, the woman, in a fit of jealous rage, threw the contents of a bottle of vitriol into the man's eyes while he was attending a banquet,

from the effects of which, after a few days of horrible suffering, he died. But even this did not open Oakland's official eyes.

My own eyes opened slowly to the real significance of all this sort of thing. Yet this I perceived dimly at the time, that the roots of the rowdyism and the consequent crime in our own suburban section of the city ran into the cellars of the best homes in Oakland, and not only the homes from which the offenders themselves came. Even the shameful liaisons of this woman and this man, and the exploitation of vice by which she lived and many of her kind, was a part of the price which the city paid for a goodness which was most superficially and indifferently good.

Oakland respectability was built on foundations of fortunes made by selling the rights of the poor to special privilege. To secure this sale a more or less open alliance was made with the vendors of vice and with the exploiters of the weaknesses of men, such as the brothels, the gambling houses and the saloons. To maintain this alliance a certain inefficiency of the police force of the city was necessary. One of the by-products of this inefficiency was the rowdyism which ended in murder that Saturday night on the "Old County road." Therefore I say that the roots of that rowdyism and that crime were interwoven with the foundation stones of many of the finest homes in Oakland, and laid hold more or less on the inefficient morality of all the decent people of the town.

This is, I believe, a sound analysis of all our civic corruption, and to a large extent of all our criminal life. We prepare a kind of moral mushroom soil in which to grow the quick fortunes which honest labor could never in a thousand years produce. What wonder if some of the growth which follows is of an openly poisonous character. Keep a city weak enough to let legal plunder go on and all kinds of illegal plundering will breed there as naturally as stables breed flies. Nine-tenths of what we call crime is by-product of what we call business.

This is the thing which I ought to have said in Oakland then and which I did not know enough to say. It would have been harder to say than what I did say. My own people were not disturbed appreciably by the effort to discredit me in public. Some of them had told me the things on which I had based my utterances, and they knew that in substance my charges were true, whether the phrasing of them was fortunate or not. Moreover, it was easy enough for them, as it is for the average congregation, to stand attacks upon the city government. There were very few of them who depended upon the city government for their support. But they did depend upon business. Their own respectability was involved

in the moral accountability of industrial and commercial institutions. To have proven that they were themselves partners in the offending would have been a far more unpleasant task. Muck-raking is popular in proportion as it is punitive of somebody else. And that, as I saw afterward, is exactly where all our muck-raking fails. It is a kind of scapegoat superstition by which we punish a more or less guilty individual here and there and let ourselves go.

Elsewhere in these articles I have said, with what may seem to some like an unfeeling severity, that in general criminals are a stupid lot. They are. If they were really shrewd, they would be respectable and get all the advantages of doing wrong in polite ways. The man who accepts a bribe is a fool. The man who gives it is not much better. It is far more profitable to be the man who hires both, or, better yet, the man who hires him, or the dividend drawer still two or three grades of respectability removed. It is nicer yet to be the women folks of the family who carry the prayer books or the theater tickets, for that matter, bought with part of the plunder. But this is not a nice or a safe thing to say in public. It isn't even wise in a worldly way, as I learned, to tell what you know about the wrongs that involve respectable officials. The thing that is safe is to hammer the saloons and the brothels, or if they are too closely associated with the sources of your revenues, to go after the men who already have the stripes on them, or the boys who are headed toward prison doors. That is safe, and you can satisfy your moral enthusiasm and win the approval of all who are ready to rebuke with you the individual and the disreputable wrong-doing without danger of disturbing respectability at the point where its unearned revenues begin. But crime doesn't begin with saloons. It doesn't even begin with city officials. When you get to its origin you will find that most of our respectability comes from the same source.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Ethics of the East.

I left Oakland not because of anything which I had said, but because of some things which I wanted to say. And because I thought it impossible to find a pulpit in California where I could say all my soul, I turned my face toward the East.

I had been twenty years on the Pacific Coast and had seen nearly every portion of it from Yautepec, in the "tierra caliente" south of Mexico City, to Vancouver, across the British border on the north. I had tasted an exceptional variety of experience, so far as the ministry is concerned, and had made myself acquainted with all sorts of service which is commonly called good. I knew the high inspirations of the ministry in a spiritual way. I knew the comforts of its home and family aspects. I had tried evangelism with what seemed like success. I had ministered to many in a personal way. Prisons and asylums I knew, and all kinds of charitable work. The goodness of the coast had been sincerely good to me. And yet I had found this very goodness one of the chief obstacles in the way of the larger good which I had come to feel the ministry ought to mean. I could not do the good I wanted to do in the fields that I knew best, because there the lesser good occupied the ground.

The Eastern trip was a journey of exploration rather than a journey of expectation. I did not go with any thought of seeking a pastorate there. I just wanted to see if goodness was larger in the East than it was here; if truth was freer on the other side of the Rockies than on this side.

I had been East just once in the twenty years, six years before. That trip lasted three months and took me from sea to sea. I was making observations then, but not under the most favorable conditions. This time I took eight months for the tour. I tarried more or less in twenty-one States. I lectured and preached in large cities and small, and held evangelistic meetings along lines of the "new evangelism" with rural congregations and with one or two churches of some prominence. I attended upon Dr. Torrey's evangelistic meetings in Chicago, and spent two weeks with the summer conference of Christian workers in Northfield, Mass. I was with the Salvation Army at Old Orchard, Maine, and in the famous Fulton street noonday prayer meeting in New York City. I heard the priest before a crowded congregation in St. Pat-

rick's on Fifth avenue, and Dr. Dawson before a much more fashionable gathering in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, a little nearer Central Park, and attended upon Sunday evening service at the Judson Memorial on the edge of Washington Square down town. I met ministers, evangelists, laymen of national and international reputation. And everywhere I looked to see whether the good was in the way of the larger good .

Let me tell my impressions in three or four incidents which happened by the way. One of them, the Boston story, belongs to the earlier trip.

One evening I dined in a prominent city of the Middle West with one of the most prominent men in the educational circles of the West. He is not a church man, but so far as I could see, showed no hostility to either churches or creeds, except when they got in the way of human good. This incident he told me in quite an unimpassioned way, with more of discouragement than resentment in his tones.

"I had occasion to attend a little while ago a notable banquet in Chicago," he said. "There were many men of prominence present from all the professions. The discusions turned largely upon issues of public welfare. It was pathetic to me that in nearly every instance the burden of protest and progress was taken up by men of secular connections, laymen, and that, generally speaking, the churchmen present were apologists for the existing order, and especially for the big special interests."

A little later I was in Chicago myself and was invited to address our denominational ministerial gathering there. My theme was "The Message of Jesus to the Men of Today." Two points I made in particular, openness to truth and human interest—that is, the passion for men. I spoke freely and with a sense of opportunity which made the hour of much importance to me.

The discussion which followed could hardly have been more reactionary had it taken place in San Francisco or Los Angeles. There were exceptions, and the speakers who accepted my message were men of more than local prominence. But the mere suggestion that ministers might do well to read R. J. Campbell's "New Theology," which was just out, before they condemned it brought down upon the head of the speaker and the name of the London minister a denunciation and dissent which was barely kept inside the limits of courtesy. Much of personal kindness indeed was shown both then and afterward, but the men who held our leading churches showed

themselves still followers of a most conservative evangelistic and individualistic faith.

One of those who received my message told me this experience of his own. He was called up one day over the telephone by a brother minister and urged to be ready on the following Monday to deal vigorously with Dr. J. B. Foster's recent writing on "The Finality of the Christian Religion." Supposing it to be a pamphlet or booklet he went over to the University of Chicago library to get it and found, to his surprise, that it was a large and, for most ministers, an expensive work. Nevertheless he paid his four dollars and took the book home.

The proposed condemnation of the book did not proceed smoothly in the ministers' meeting, owing to the influence of the university men and their friends. This particular minister, while not prepared to indorse the book, was one of those who would not vote against it, and maintained that heresy trials were no proper part of the ministers' meeting. One of his deacons took him to task for not acting with those who were ready to anathematize the book offhand.

"Have you read the book, deacon?" asked the minister.

"No, I haven't, and I don't want to read it," said the other man. "I know all I want to know about it now."

"Well, I have read it in part, deacon," said the minister, who is a man of pluck, "and while there are some things in it with which I do not agree, there is much with which I do, and I am not going to condemn it."

The deacon balked in consequence and would not perform his functions in the church, so that it became a question whether he or the pastor would have to go, in which the church as a whole took the pastor's part. But I found many men of the deacon's mind in the East, and good men, too, in their own limited way. They had some truth and they were using it to keep themselves from getting more. I do not mean that they intended it so, but this was the practical result.

Before I tell the Boston story, let me make it very plain that I am not telling all that I saw and heard. There was much that was delightful in the church life of the East, as I had found much that is delightful in the church life of the West. Miracles of moral healing are wrought there also. The social life is less manifest to a stranger, but when once inside the family feeling is not wanting and the fellowship is often fine. Missionary and philanthropic work is splendidly sustained by the churches of the East, and the sacrifices of many of the givers would shame the selfishness of some of the recipients

in the West to whom the funds are sent. If I do not speak more at length concerning the lovableness of much of the Christian living which I found in the East it is because my story must be brief at this point and because I am emphasizing throughout another point of view. There is much good among the churches and among respectable circles everywhere. The man who does not find it, whether east or west, has something seriously the matter with himself.

But there, as here, the good is the chief hindrance to the better. And there, as here, the whole attitude toward goodness on the part of most of those who are reckoned respectable and even religious is misleading to a mischievous degree.

I sat at meat in Boston on that first visit there to which I have referred with one of the leaders of New England's religious life. He is, in a careful Eastern way, something of a progressive himself.

"The churches here, as far as I have seen them," I said in answer to his interest in my impressions," do not seem to be very different from the churches on the Pacific Coast. I have hardly seen enough of them to pass judgment. But I feel as though your men who are succeeding here are men of methods rather than men with a message; that you are making more of institutions than of inspiration."

"I think it is so," he replied, quietly, "I have heard most of the men around Boston, and I have not found one who has a message for me."

My second visit intensified that impression. Both religion and respectability, generally speaking, are good enough in Boston for those who have them. They don't want anything better New methods are permissible within reasonable boundaries of propriety, but a new message that is really vital can only find utterance through more or less disreputable channels. New England goodness is very carefully restraining New England from the understanding and pursuit of the best. Yet some things are being said there, even in respectable circles, which are big with hope. If only the good there could forget their phylacteries and their prayer tassels and all the rest of the paraphernalia of their piety for awhile and could get into really human contact with the foreigners in the factories and the sweated laborers behind the looms there would be a power in their goodness beyond anything of which they dream to-day.

Northfield, beautiful beyond words, is strangely far removed from the religious reality which New England needs. I watched a red-headed lad in the gallery of the big auditorium making notes on J. Campbell Morgan's lectures on the

Book of Romans. The boy was about twelve years of age.

He evidently thought he was interested and was doing the devout thing, although it was as unlikely that he got anything out of it except pious self-satisfaction as it was that he understood Sanskrit. Northfield is redolent with the odors of yesterday's religiosity and today's respectability. It is a garden of flowers which makes one long for a few common vegetables. Sinners are welcome there, very welcome in a way—the way of making just one particular type of saints out of them. But Northfield is farther away from Lawrence than Nova Scotia is from San Francisco Bay. They only know a man in one posture, the posture of conventional prayer. They talk continually of the new birth there, but the agony of the new social birth is to them but the symptom of an already labeled individual disease. Their ethic is personal, provincial, pious. They are still talking in terms of the ages before machinery was known. They are looking to the skies for the climax of a spectacular and supernatural salvation which cannot wait on the slow working of really spiritual forces in the world. And meanwhile the Man of Nazareth comes from the bench of the artisan again.

I came back from the East as bewildered as when I went away. I had touched life here, the man of the store and the street, the prisoner behind the bars, the workingman in his new comradeship, feeling his way toward the new democracy. They had filled me with a big dissatisfaction with formal religiousness, with the limitations of individual goodness which I saw resting upon the back of the oppressed with no sense of its own parasitical character. I had heard the call of the human, but I knew not how to voice its cry. I had not found the pulpit of the West open to it. The pulpit of the East was not less closed. Sometimes I wondered if I could find the democracy of Jesus of which I was trying to talk on the other side of the sea.

CHAPTER XX.

The Swelling Flood.

Between England and America there is a wide waste of water. I was six years old when I crossed it the first time, coming this way. Seven times six years had passed when I crossed it again, going eastward this time. My impressions of the first journey were a child's impressions and are only dimly recalled. The second journey across, and the return, left upon me memories of so much more than incidental importance that all my thinking about civilization is affected by them now. I never saw the shallowness of conventional goodness so clearly as I saw it on board ship.

At the time I hardly understood my impressions myself. I knew that I was not happy on shipboard, and that my physical conditions had nothing to do with it. Neither going nor coming did seasickness disturb me to the extent of making me miss a single meal. Going over, old ocean was as placid as an inland lake on an ordinary afternoon, with this difference only, that the waters moved in slow, far-reaching swells. We were literally "rocked in the cradle of the deep," but in a very easy, drowsy way. Coming back, fog and storm beset us, and the way was cold, for it was late November. I remember walking the deck one day when we were "off the banks" and in the very neighborhood where the ill-fated Titanic went down a few months later, and thinking what a fearful thing a wreck would be in such a situation. But none of these things moved me to the deep dissatisfaction with the transatlantic trip which grows upon me whenever I think of it to this day.

Elsewhere I have written more at length concerning this experience, and concerning our days in Great Britain. I am writing of that adventure here with just one point in view. But I do not owe this way of looking at my sea experience to this present writing. Rather is the present writing an outgrowth of conditions of thinking which have been ripening for many years and which ripened very rapidly while I was out of sight of land. I know now that I saw civilization best when I was away from it, or, to say the thing more exactly, when it was compressed in one monstrous miniature before my eyes.

So much has been written about the restfulness of life aboard one of the big "liners," and so much has the "palatial" character of the liners themselves been exploited in word and picture that I recognize the fact that my complaint will seem at first utterly unreasonable to many who read these words. Good people a-plenty have gone across and have thoroughly

enjoyed the good company, the good fare and the opportunity to rest from the ordinary distractions of life on land. The praise of the passage, when it can be taken without the discomfort of seasickness, has been so convincingly set forth by the best writers that I knew some will think I must at least have been bilious while on shipboard to speak of the matter so. Which only leads me to remark that nothing is more positive proof of the heartlessness of a lot of our goodness than the way in which multitudes of respectable and religious people "enjoy Europe" with not the slightest token that they ever had the slightest stirring of social consciousness from the day they packed their trunks till the day they unpacked again.

The "ocean palaces" are well named, I freely admit. "Palaces" they are, indeed, with all the snobbery and the absurd inequalities and rank injustice of the world of luxury and fashion and unearned wealth gathered into the smallest possible space and exhibited in the most glaring characters.

Neither going nor coming was our ship crowded, except under our feet. Even there the poor were packed in a little less uncomfortably than common, I was told. Above us, in the "First Cabin," a few solitary figures, remote and morose as Napoleon at St. Helena, swathed in concealing draperies, stalked the decks from which we were excluded as if they were meditating continually on the price which they had paid, chiefly for our exclusion.

But the mockery of the moneyed mummies above us did not concern me as did the humanness of the company that crowded the squalid quarters below. Some will say that squallid is too strong a word to use in view of the improvement which has taken place of late years in "third cabin" accomodation. But I went below, and went all through those quarters myself as far as considerations of sex would allow. I saw something, as much as my stomach would comfortably let me see, and more, of the messy manner in which they were fed. I saw the berths where they slept, and talked with men who had closer experience of them than I cared to know. I studied the men and women who were there, and the accomodations for their comfort and well-being during the long days and nights on board. And besides this I studied the crew, though not as intimately as I might have done, and learned much of the manner of life which they lived on whom our own comfort and prosperity depended in large degree. Likewise I attended religious services—Roman Catholic and Anglican Catholic, and plain Protestant—in the cabins high and

low. And I have never in my life felt more the possible impieties of pious profession, the substantial irreligiousness of formal religion, or the contemptable indecency of current respectability. A ship at sea is a minature of our still most undemocratic and unchristian world. The Christian man who can cross in one of them without feeling it is tremendously in need of a "new birth." And the shame of our Americanism is not that we spend annually millions of unearned increment and legalized piratical toll in spectacular displays abroad of the failures of democracy at home, but that even our well-to-do common people and our peregrinating educators and pulpiteers do not know a denial of democracy when it is thrust under their eyes. We have thought of goodness itself so much in terms of certain proper abstinences and on the active side in terms of formal religiosities and self-complacent philanthropies that we look on our commercial inhumanities as a matter of course and do not know that they give the lie to both the patriotism and the piety which we profess. A week on shipboard ought to be enough to make any decent man feel the moral indecency of the whole respectable regime to which he belongs.

There is one point on which I have not touched here, and on which I do not need to dwell. A word will explain it to those who can understand, and volumes would be wasted on those who on either sea or land have no sense of anything but physical sensation in life. Everywhere if a man opens his eyes, the mystery of life grows big upon him. Nowhere is that mystery more omnipresent, more oppressive than it is at sea. And in the midst of that vast solemnity to have the heartlessness and the hypocrisy of civilization condensed before you is to experience a moral chill which no words can tell. With nothing to see but the limitless waters, with nothing to do but to putter with life's incidentals, and with the world's social sham and shame glaring before you more searchingly than the light that flares back at you from the shimmering waters, the effect upon a man who dares to think real thoughts and experience real feelings is to all but overthrow the rationality of the universe in his mind. Yet there is nothing really the matter with the universe. The matter is with us, and with our "goodness" most of all, that it is still such a halt and maimed and blind thing.

The government of Great Britain more than any government of equal political significance is busy now "doing good." I studied all her chief cities as much as the unaccustomedness

of my circumstances and the limitations of time and money would allow. Such traveling as we did inside the borders of Great Britain was dominated neither by scenic nor historic considerations, although we had regard to both of these, as was inevitable. We did not know what we had seen till we were able to close our eyes after it was all over and see it mentally again. I have been two years recovering from the bewilderment of the unusual and the personal in that contact with my own country wherein I found myself a "native foreigner," and had an experience so rare in many of its aspects as to seem almost unreal. Now that the incidental has fallen into its place I can view in their true proportions the really big things that we saw.

The biggest of them all was England's effort to be really religious, and respectably respectable. The churches disappointed me, and in the main seemed to me to be mouthing shibboleths as far removed from the word the twentieth century needs as our obsolete orthodoxies of respectability over here. I did not hear, even from R. J. Campbell, the prophet's call to the righteousness which our age imperatively needs.

Only one man uttered it in my hearing, and he in a very incidental way, so that it was hard to judge how far he had seen the vision of a really moral world. I heard David Lloyd George in the English House of Commons discussing in the committee of the whole his famous insurance bill. He was too busy to see me, and I was too unimportant to force myself upon him. But I met the other members of his family, as I have elsewhere told, and I studied him in the reflection of his influence upon the British public, and since I returned I have tried to understand what I saw of what he and men like him are trying to do on the other side of the sea. It comes the nearest to real goodness of anything of the sort which I have anywhere seen.

David Lloyd George is a far better man than the other David of whom we mumble too much in our pulpits in a very superficial way. Those who, on the other side of the sea, mumble most superficially about the other David are those who most despise the doughty Welshman who bears the truly great name. One of the best tokens that David Lloyd George is actually worthy of the respect of the ages is that he is so cordially hated by a host of his respectable contemporaries. They hate him, not because his goodness is not good, but because he is trying to make their goodness something more than the canting cover for all sorts of social injustice which it is today. Any man who tries to make good people really good

is the worst kind of a bad man in the high circles of both church and state.

I am only afraid that Lloyd George himself is going to be satisfied with a half-way goodness. He is forcing the respectable robberies of England into the open, and its plundering piosities are trembling with rage because he has pulled off the surplices which cover their shame. They are willing to buy him off, and the great common horde which is behind him, by letting go some of the feathers if they may keep the fowls on which they have been fattening. Even the loss of the feathers is a discomfort which they can hardly endure. Without the fowls—words fail.

Will Lloyd George be satisfied when he has won a partial victory? Will the people behind him "rest and be thankful" when the lords of their living have granted them some seats outside the walls on which to unburden their overworked limbs, and let the lords still keep the substance of the earth enclosed against them? Concessions are more dangerous than opposition. It is goodness again, at a bankrupt percentage, offering to settle with us for ten cents on the dollar if it may keep the other ninety which is our honest due. Goodness is always doing that sort of thing, both with God and Man. We are willing enough to be nice about our naughtiness if we can keep the profits of our naughtiness. The difference between most good people and most bad people is that the bad people insist on doing it—no, "doing us"—in their shirt-sleeves, while the good people are kind enough to please us by wearing some really well-made clothes. It isn't the clothes to which I object. I honestly admire them. It is the using such good clothes for business that isn't good.

CHAPTER XXI.

Goodness in a Dry Town.

The greatest victory of goodness in Los Gatos is that it has met and conquered the saloon. The fight was long, and was complicated with many other issues of a personal and social character. There were reverses, due in the main to the purposeful obscuring of the real question. The issue was forced in the first place by the saloons themselves.

This story was told me by one of the leading merchants of Los Gatos. He is not a member of any church and seldom attends upon any preaching. As a business man and citizen generally his standing has always been first class.

There was a man here, young enough yet to be called a young man, although he had a family of his own. A good man under ordinary circumstances, he was so addicted to drink that for the sake of it he would let his family starve while he squandered his earnings across the bar.

One day his father, seeing the obvious need of the family, gave the man five dollars to get some supplies for the wife and children. A little later in the evening the father discovered that the family need had not been met. He suspected the truth, and going to one of the saloons he found his son sitting at a table where he had been drinking and otherwise dissipating that which had been given him to supply the table at home.

Without a word of protest the younger man rose in response to his father's quiet word and went out. The father lingered a moment, and approaching the man behind the bar said to him in a modest and reasonable way. "I wish you wouldn't sell my boy any liquor. He needs what he has for his family, and he can't stand drink."

The saloon keeper turned upon him contemptuously. "You go to h—l," he said. "I'll sell liquor to whoever I please."

The same business man who told me this named half a dozen men or more whom he had known in this town, all men of naturally fine qualities and good industrial and professional capacity, who had each and all fallen into a drunkard's grave within the term of his residence here.

'I am not naturally a prohibitionist at all, and I don't call myself one now, but that sort of thing has made me sick of the saloon here," he remarked.

One other word needs to be said. The temperance people did not at first propose to close the saloons outright; they asked only for Sunday closing. It was the saloons themselves which in the arrogance of their persuasion that they had the people at their mercy refused to accept any curtailing of their liberties, and challenged the church people to make the issue absolute, saloon or no saloon. It was not until they were unexpectedly beaten on their own ground that they posed as advocates of "moderation" themselves.

That which has happened here is going to happen all over the United States. The saloon has no capacity for self-reform, and will die rather than be decent.

There is no doubt that the fight against the saloon was won here by the church people. There were men outside of the churches, and women, who helped on the victory, as in the instance of the business man to whom I have referred, but in the main outside respectability was either neutral or negative. On the straight issue of saloon or no saloon today, however, the decency of the town whether outside or inside of the churches, is all but unanimous against the return of the saloon.

If in this series of articles I have said more of the deficiencies of goodness inside the churches than I have of the deficiencies of goodness outside of the churches it has been chiefly due to the fact that my own life work has been mainly with church people, and that church people are reasonably supposed to represent emphatically the righteous cause. But lest I contribute to an increase of Phariseeism in a quarter where it is already evident enough, and lest by lack of candor I cater to a favor for myself which I do not want, let me say right here some things which need to be said about the shortcomings of non-religious respectability.

I have always had a liking for the man on the outside. Generally speaking he is freer from cant, piosity and the whole parade of ritualistic and dogmatic righteousness.

Down in Maine, on my Eastern trip, I heard this story and enjoyed it: At one of the big summer resorts not far from Portland a wealthy woman, very pious and very irritable and arrogant, was staying. One morning she complained in exceedingly bad temper that she had been annoyed by some man swearing under her windows.

"Oh," said the hotel owner, to whom the complaint was made, "that was my manager. He is really a very decent fellow. That is just his way of saying his prayers, madam, and he doesn't mean them any more than you do yours."

I know men whose swearing is less offensive to me than some other men's prayers. They at least are genuine, and generally their indignation is directed against the thing that is hypocritical and inhuman. I know of nothing more blasphemous than a cannibalism which says grace before meals.

But I have found that omitting the formulas of religion does not necessarily make men better. They may be less marked non-religious respectability has its own piosities. I have found by superficial insincereties, though even this is not always so, for more affectation of tone and manner in the clubs, especially the more fashionable women's clubs, than I have ever found in the churches. The social cant and pretense of the "smart set," or worse yet the would-be smart set of the small town, is more in evidence than any cant and pretense which I have ever met in religious circles.

This, however, is rather incidental whether it is of the church or of the club. Affectation is too amusing to be taken very seriouslv, whether it affects piety or propriety. The defectiveness of non-church goodness is deeper yet.

The larger insincerity of life is just as common among the merely respectable as it is among the religious.

In my Oakland ministry one of the frequent attendants in the evening was a man who was always superciliously complaining about the hypocricies of church members. He had had religious training, had been intimate with church affairs, and "had seen too much of the dishonesty of ministers and church members to have any patience with either."

Whether he thought me honest or not I do not know. From the friendliness with which he treated me I suppose he thought well of me. I liked him.

I had a chance to test his work just once, and it was as insincere a job as I ever saw. The reasons may have been economic. I do not know the price he was paid for the work. But I know the work itself was of a kind of which any truly honest man ought to have been ashamed.

Nothing is more common than the accusation that ministers trim their teachings to suit their salaries. Some of them do, though much more in the way of silence than in the way of saying what they do not believe. But moral cowardice is much more rare among them than it is among ordinary business men. The average respectable non-religious man in business will run to cover if there is any danger of his convictions costing him a dime. That is the reason why commercial bodies can be trusted commonly to get on the wrong side of all progressive issues.

Nor is the economic explanation always sufficient either outside of the church or in it. Respectability is sometimes just heartless, without regard to money.

One of my brother ministers in this neighborhood met the appeal of the petition against capital punishment with a dogmatic refusal.

"Capital punishment is right, and I know it. The scripture is plain enough. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

One of the chief ministers of his own church proved in an elaborate treatise sixty years ago that the Bible was on the side of African slavery. And he lived in Vermont and not in Virginia when he wrote the book.

The same petition against capital punishment was presented to a man who is not a church member, a public official in this vicinity, and presumably a man of decent personal morals. He replied succinctly. "Stop hanging them? No, d—n it. I'd like to see a lot more of them hung."

I canvassed the streets of San Jose one evening, bearing that petition, with another minister. He is a liberal, a scholar, an optimist. It was perfectly plain to him that this was a progressive measure, in the direction of the forward movement of man, and he could see no reason why any man should refuse to sign it, unless he were a hide-bound theological conservative.

He talked with man after man on the streets. Most of them were plainly not church men, and had no interest in theology. They were not street loafers. They were just average respectable business men. By and by he came back to me. He was both physically and morally, to use a picturesque expression, "tuckered out."

"I am not sure," he said with a whimsical smile, "but that I do believe in capital punishment after all."

But it was not the criminals that he wanted to hang. And the criminals themselves could not have talked more heartlessly about the matter than did some of those respectable men.

There is a current morality among us which is more dangerous thn religious pretense. It is the morality which deems it sufficient if a man pays his debts, treats his family decently, abstains from drink or knows how to drink without getting drunk, wears good clothes, and does his grafting without getting into trouble with the law. Its god is success, and its working creed is respectability. And there is nothing that stands more in the way of the world's progress than this sort of thing today.

All that I have written thus far about the defectiveness of

religious goodness applies to this non-religious respectability with equal or with greater force. It is as pretentious, as patronizing, as pauperizing, as insincere. It defends even more desperately the perquisites of special privilege, and the dividends of social robbery. It stands in with the worst elements in the churches against the best efforts of our time on behalf of the common good. It is Sadducean in spirit, but it can be counted on generally to make common cause with Phariseeism whenever there is a real Messiah to be done to death. It has all the heartlessness of religious heartlessness without conscience enough to even covet the shelter of a creed.

This I have felt that I must say in faithfulness before I sum up what I have come to feel concerning all our goodness through years of acquaintance with goodness in its every phase. Some of the selient features of my experience I have told. Let me tell in a few words more what these experiences mean to me.

CHAPTER XXII.

A Poet's Way of Putting It.

One of the men who called me pastor a few years ago was Joaquin Miller. He was not a member of my church, nor of any other church, I am quite sure. He was never so much as an attendant in my congregation. But I have a letter yet in which he dubs me "pastor," and I had the pleasure and profit of more than one pastoral call at his cabin on "The Heights." The profit, I think, was chiefly on my side.

Miller hated cant and insincerities of every sort. His contempt for the conventional was so pronounced that it became almost a formalism itself. His brusqueness was more marked than that of Moody.

Once, I remember, he lectured at "California College," our local Baptist school. He came to the platform with his trousers tucked in the tops of his boots. What he said was very much in the same style. The pastor of our leading church in Oakland went up to him, when the address was done and with a broad smile, said:

"I enjoyed your lecture very much, Mr. Miller."

"Well, don't lie about it; if you do you'll go to hell," was the instant response of Miller.

The last time I talked with him in his cabin on "The Heights" mention was made of the work that he had done with his own hands. He was proud of the walls which he had built, and the multitude of trees which he had planted.

"Fifty thousand trees!" he ejaculated, "all growing on Sunday."

That last remark was more than a challenge to my clerical character. It was his affirmation of the freedom of nature from all our formal restraints. The soul of his protest against institutionalism was there.

"Of course, I have made mistakes," he confessed in that same conversation. "Take the mistakes out of my life and I wouldn't have six bits left."

Again, referring to his laborious life, he said, with fine antithesis. "I don't know whether I have worked so hard because I have been so strong, or whether I have been so strong because I have worked so hard."

I think I understand Joaquin Miller now better than I did in those days when I talked with him face to face. I might have talked with him far more than I did. But I am not writing of Miller either to exploit him or the measure of my acquaintance with him. I have told these incidents and these say-

ings of his here because they express in a concrete way so much of the substance of that which I have come to feel is lacking in the respectable goodness of the world. Miller's impatience of our ordinary insincerities, his contempt for formalism, the largeness of his charity toward others, and his wholly unsanctimonious humility toward himself, and finally his faith in common everyday labor for every man and his unwillingness to live by the sweat of other men's brows made him, in my opinion, a real prophet to our generation. He did not let his half good deceive him into thinking that he had achieved the good. He was void of cant, conceit, and covetousness. And these all are the vices of the virtue of our time, north and south, east and west, and on either side of the sea.

Nothing in all my long and varied experience of the ministry has impressed me more than the prevalence of cant. Formal phrases and affected mannerisms are the stock in trade of all respectability. Religion itself is always running into religiousness, which is quite another thing. Sincerity in a superficial way is common to most men; there are comparatively few conscious imposters. In this sense hypocrites are really rare, and most people at least mean to be genuine. But genuineness in fact, the higher sincerity of being simply and naturally real and open to all reality is one of the rarest and one of the most difficult achievements in the world. The first sin of goodness is its ordinary want of simple, wholesome, unaffected naturalness.

This is true of the pulpit itself. Conventions of dress, conventions of attitude, conventions of tone, conventions of phrase, conventions of subservience to texts, conventions of thought, from beginning to end the man in the pulpit is a formalist before he is a man. We see it plainly enough when we go into some church where the conventions are more elaborate, or at least notably different from our own. What we are slow to see is that it is not the quantity of our formalism which makes us formalists, but it is our bondage to it and our willingness to be unreal for somebody else's sake.

In the old Y. M. C. A. building in Oakland the Rev. Robert Stuart MacArthur of New York, passing through the Bay Cities on his way to the Orient, met one day a group of our ministers and gave us a real heart talk. One of the things he said was this, though he was pleading for more ritual rather than less.

"Bondage to ritual is not a matter of how much you use. Our hard and fast services, with an opening invocation or short prayer, a long prayer, three hymns, a sermon, and a benediction, may be as rigidly ritualistic as a much more elaborate service. As a matter of fact we of the non-ritualistic churches are just

as much tied up to our bare conventions as anybody well could be."

Now, I am not arguing for ritual, or against it. I care nothing about it, except when it gets in the way of my being natural and altogether genuine. I object to all kinds of tight-lacing. That is to my mind the chief trouble with all of the churches. I don't like smoking, and I don't like spitting, and I certainly would not like to see saw-dust floors and the spittoon introduced as features of religious meetings. But I think I understand today in spite of my repugnance toward a smoke-laden atmosphere and the unsightliness of the floors in places where the workingmen gather in large numbers why such places are more popular than churches. It is not the nastiness of men naturally, nor their natural depravity in any other way. The preference for such places is fundamentally the preference for reality. There is a wasp-waist Miss Nancyishness about a lot of our piety which makes it as uninviting to an ordinary man with a lot of good red blood in his veins as any mincing maiden of the old spinster sort could be. It is altogether too much done up in cosmetics and clothes.

I have made manifest in this series the freedom of my contact with men outside of the churches because they have done me this large service; they have made me ashamed of the effeminacy of a lot of our religious life. And by effeminacy I do not mean any reference to the preponderance of women in the pews, although doubtless this has something to do with the ultra "niceness" of ordinary religious meetings. The emancipation of woman is going to emancipate us from a good deal of coarseness on the one hand and a good deal of overniceness on the other. The effeminacy of religious gatherings is much more than a matter of sex. It is because religion is too respectable that it runs so to primping and to mincing ways. All respectability does that sort of thing. Very few of us know how to be decent without being overdressed.

Last Sunday night I spoke at a Socialist meeting in San Francisco. Some of those who have only heard me in church before were there to hear me. One of the best women that I know was there, a woman whose face is set in a halo of white hair, and whose life is whiter yet with its own purity and kindliness and ministry to others. She had never been in such a meeting before. Afterwards she remarked to me with wonder:

"It seemed to me such a queer audience at first, such a lot of common looking people."

The freedom of the hall, and the wholly unconventional ways of the audience impressed her as entirely different from

the surroundings of church life where she has seen me hitherto. I know just how she felt, because I felt that way myself when I launched out after leaving Oakland, and for a time spent many a Sunday night on the radical lecture platform.

Joaquin Miller would have been entirely at home with that audience on Sunday night. He might not have agreed with them in their thinking, nor they with him, but the personal contact would have been cordial and understanding. He had something of Jack London's liking for men in "the raw," and if with both Miller and London the rawness seems to be sometimes overdone the fault is on our side as much as on theirs. Over emphasis there may be of purpose with them, but it is to correct the over emphasis which is first of all with us.

London was one of the members of the Ruskin Club in Oakland when I joined it. He was in my parish in East Oakland when he was working his way toward the recognition of today. I did not know him then and would not have understood him if I had known him. Very few "good" people understand him now He is too human for our niceness to tolerate him. He returns repugnance for our niceness, with interest, sometimes too much compounded, I confess. But London came into my life at a time when I needed him, and together with a lot of men "of the world," as the pious would say, he has helped me more than the pious ever did to feel how human and how real religion ought to be.

What I have written will probably not help London, or the memory of Joaquin Miller with nice people, I know. It will only hurt me so far as their estimate is concerned. Nevertheless, I want to say it again, just a little more plainly if I can before I quit. The first trouble with all of our goodness is that it is too far away from shirt-sleeves and overalls. Most churches make an ordinary man feel about as much at home as he feels in a fashionable woman's club. The "feel" of virtue is, not that of denim and gingham, it is rather that of chiffon and lace. Most of the men whom I have known in the churches whom the churches could not hold were men who wanted to touch life humanly, and the churches were not human enough for them. Big, hearty, red-blooded men do not take to the churches. "Billy" Sunday's strength is not his theology, it is his humanity. He overdoes it, of course, in the reaction from the unreality of most of our religious work. But he is much nearer that which goodness needs than are all the fine essayists of all the pulpits in the land. Moody was vastly more effective before he became respectable.

The scandals which arise from the exposure of outright and outrageous insincerity in circles of religion and respectability are not the most serious menace to the progress of real righteousness among men. They are less injurious than our ordinary and unconscious insincerities. Bad men who pretend to be good and are detected in the pretense do not hurt us as much as good men who are good but who do not know how to be human in their goodness. More girls are lost to goodness through the over-niceness of the good, than through the maliciousness of the bad. The chief trouble with righteousness is its remoteness from the common things of common life.

I can see now that the humanness of my father and mother helped me more than their piety. There was no cant about their goodness, it was real flesh and blood. I have suffered more from cant in the churches than from anything else, and cant in respectable circles outside the churches. Those who have helped me most have been those who have touched me deepest with the feeling of their humanity. Missionaries, ministers, slum workers, educators, editors, agitators, I value them all today as I find them natural, unaffected, open-minded and open-hearted, simply and wholesomely and humanly sincere, without cant, without piosity, and without pretense.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"Neither Do I Condemn Thee."

The most human thing that I heard at Northfield was a story by "Lem" Broughton, then of Atlanta, but now of London, England. It was told in his mose effective manner, too effective indeed for any one to repeat it with equal effectiveness. It is a pity that all the decent people of the nation could not hear his telling of it in his own way.

The story concerned one of the young women of his congregation who had "fallen." She walked into church unexpectedly one morning, when Broughton was preaching with all his heart the love of God. Her seat was far in the rear of the congregation, near the door, where she herself had dropped down in a timid way.

Carried away by the tenderness of his own message Broughton gave an invitation at the close of the sermon, although such was not his custom on a Sunday morning. To the confusion both of the preacher and of some of the leading officials of the church who knew the girl's reputation this woman arose, after a moment of hesitation, and made her way down to the front.

Broughton was very frank about his own short-coming of spirit on that occasion. He owned that he dropped his eyes, afraid of a scene, and feeling in himself the similar confusion of his respectable congregation. The awkwardness of the moment was increased when the woman just as she reached the front, overcome by her own feelings and the consciousness of her shame, threw up her arms and with a loud cry to God for mercy fell on her face before the altar of the church.

The preacher still hesitated, his eyes downcast, when he heard a stirring behind him. He was afraid to figure out in his own mind what it meant. And then he and all the congregation were swept away in a great wave of mighty moral uplift by what happened.

Led by one brave girl as pure as she was brave the whole choir came down silently from their recess behind the pulpit, and falling into line each girl as she came opposite the sinful woman at the altar stooped down and kissed her tenderly on the forehead.

"They literally kissed that girl into heaven," was the preacher's dramatic conclusion, as he pictured the effect upon the woman. And the hearts of all that mighty audience in Atlanta and the hearts of all who heard the telling of the story at

Northfield were caught up to heaven also on the wings of that wonderful up-reach of love.

I wish I could tell that story as a part of my own ministry. I could forget years of formalisms for one such experience of such a real Christian humility and sympathy as that. Yet it is something, it is much indeed, to know that so many can respond to even the telling of such a story today.

There is no point at which our goodness commonly falls more than it does with respect to our ordinary censoriousness of others. Such censoriousness exhibits itself naturally to poorest advantages in the small town where everybody knows everybody else.

A few days ago I met a man on the streets of Los Gatos who had lived here for years. He has recently moved away and makes his home now in San Francisco. His life here was blameless in a moral way. I do not remember to have ever heard a word reflecting upon his character. He is a man of kindly spirit naturally, and besides his religion will not allow him to think harshly of others. It was all the more remarkable therefore, that he made the confession he did.

I had asked him how he liked San Francisco. He spoke most cordially his appreciation of the place.

"The best thing about it is this," he said. "I have lived so long in a small town where everybody knows everybody that you can hardly imagine what a relief it is to be able to walk the streets and just be one in the crowd, and to feel that nobody is concerned to pass judgment upon you."

If he, who had suffered so little from censoriousness, could feel the criticalness of our ordinary social contact whenever it becomes intimate how evident is it that a really humble estimate of ourselves and a kindly judgment of other people is not even in good society a common mood.

The trouble is not with our town. It is, I think, freer from that sort of thing than most small communities are. Nor do I think the trouble was due to any supersensitiveness on his part. The difficulty is rather that it is so much easier to be good as we commonly understand goodness than it is to be kind.

At the bottom kindness means understanding. When we understand others, and especially when we understand ourselves, we cannot help being kind.

The ignorance of our goodness is responsible for the conceit of it. When some big wave of circumstance flings wide the doors and we get a full view of some fellow being's heart and see how much like our own it is we forget our petty pride and

reserve and for the moment any one of us can lay all our censoriousness aside and be as human as the Christ in the presence of the woman who had sinned. If we could maintain the moods which come to us in such an hour we would know something of what it means to be really good.

There has been much in my ministry in Los Gatos to make me glad. I could write of it readily at length if such fulness could serve the purposes of this confession. It has been the freest ministry of my life. I have never done so much hard work nor done it so easily as here, because I have never been so free from formalisms of every kind. The pulpit here seems to me the sincerest pulpit I have ever known, that is, it is possible to speak a wider variety of truth here with concern only to serve the truth in simplicity of soul than on any platform on which I have ever stood. No man who has once tasted the fulness of freedom can ever hold it again second to anything in his life. If I had known what liberty is I would have had liberty before.

But it has been easier for us to learn liberty here than it has for us to learn love. To get away from servitude to creeds and rituals, and from common cant of every kind, is easier than to get into a really human fellowship with all your fellows.

Nothing which I have said will bear repetition better than that which I said in my first chapter in this series. The hardest test of virtue is its attitude toward vice. Liberal churches are sometimes more loveless than illiberal churches. Goodness often understands badness less than badness itself.

I am more afraid of the conceit of goodness than I am of its cant. Our formalisms among ourselves do less harm than does our unfriendliness toward those who are outside our social or moral pale. Even sincerity cannot turn the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The only way we ever let people into life is the way of love. And very few of us really love sinners.

More than anything else our conceit keeps us from loving them. We think they are so different from ourselves, when in truth they are very much like us. Only sometimes they are sinners because they wanted to be better than ourselves.

Don't misunderstand me. Do you remember that saying of Rev. R. J. Campbell of London which gave perhaps greater offense than anything else which he said in his famous book on the "New Theology." It was to the effect that even sin may be a quest after good. It is a mistaken quest which takes fearful penalty for its mistakeness, but at the bottom what we know as sin began with a great hungering of heart for more happiness, more wholesomeness, more abundance of life.

Now there are some people who are not positive enough to be very bad. They are moral cowards who never venture away from entirely safe and conventional courses. Their goodness, such as it is, is purely negative. Lots of what passes for virtue is made up of timidities of disposition and hardnesses of self-restraint as unlovable as vice itself. I am not sure but that a great deal of apparent goodness is more ruinous to character than some of the misadventures of men who have at least had the openness of heart to fare forth in search of a larger life. The mere impassiveness of a negative nature which hasn't life enough in it to feel the pull of life may pass the formal tests of respectability, but I dare to believe that it will fare worse in the eternal working out of the issues of character than much which we have called vice.

I am not sure but that the prodigal son even before he turned back was a more hopeful proposition by far than his very proper and negatively heartless elder brother.

I have known a good many men of very defective habits who had more of the humanness of real character about them than many a more proper man. This I say quite apart from those social considerations which must be weighed carefully if we are to measure fairly our merit or demerit. Propriety is in an individual way sometimes the headiest kind of a servant for the most serious social impropriety. But of that I shall speak yet more at length. What I mean here is that character is a good deal more than outward conduct, just as health is a good deal more than a superficial flawlessness of skin. There may be outward blemish and more health inside than where the blemish does not appear. I have found a great many "men of the world" more Christian in spirit than many who mouth unconsciously the Master's name.

Joaquin Miller wrote a bit of verse years ago better than anything he ever said to me. It would vastly improve our goodness if we could really learn it "by heart." Here it is:

"In men whom men condemn as ill
I find so much of goodness still,
In men whom men pronounce divine
I find so much of sin and blot
I hesitate to draw a line
Between the two, where God has not."

My old pulpit classifications of "saved" and "unsaved," "sinners" and "saints" have already passed for me. I am afraid to use them, except as I use all of them and all together for everybody else and for myself. I am both "saved" and "unsaved," both "sinner" and "saint" if I can trust my own con-

sciousness. And I would rather trust it than to trust any kind of a mechanical theory which ministers to spiritual self-conceit.

I have found the church and its ministers helpful, that is why I stick to them in spite of their very obvious shortcomings. But I have found that badness and goodness cannot be measured by any ecclesiastical or theological or social scales. There is so much badness in all the goodness, so much goodness in all the badness, that I am more and more of the opinion that all our formal sitting in judgment on one another is a colossal, yes, a criminal self-conceit. I would not substitute pity for condemnation, though that would often prove a real advance. But our badness does not need pity half so mcuh as it needs understanding. And that is one of the chief defects of all our goodness, its lack of a big, human understanding love. Goodness could melt badness away if only it had the warmth of its heavenly origin in itself.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Piety of the Parasite.

Since I became pastor in Los Gatos two of my friends of other years have gone to the penitentiary, convicted in both cases of having misappropriated other people's money. They were leaders in respectable and religious society five years ago. They are wearing stripes as common felons today.

One of these men I knew but casually, yet I knew him as an active and influential member of one of the leading evangelical churches in the community. His income was large, in appearance at least, and he had the entrance to the best society in town. He served the state in a high legislative office before he was branded with the colors of crime.

The other man I knew intimately, and his father before him. He came of one of the finest families on the Pacific Coast, a family of much more than ordinary moral stamina. He was brought up in the atmosphere of prayer. His own domestic circle was of the religious type. He was himself an earnest and devout Christian, and not at all of the canting kind. His friends trusted him implicitly, and I would have trusted him myself with all I have. Besides he had a salary quite sufficient for any reasonable man's needs, fifteen to twenty times greater than the average yearly earnings of the average working man. Nevertheless, he gambled heavily with other men's money, not as ordinary gamblers do but in a business way, the luck of the game went against him, and shame unspeakable has overtaken him and the innocent who bear his name.

I have said "the innocent," but I am afraid I shall have to withdraw the word. But I will not withdraw it for them unless I can withdraw it for us all.

There has been a good deal of talk among the respectable and religious people who were scandalized by the exposure and the conviction of these men concerning the causes of their moral collapse. I do not believe the men are any worse men today in stripes than they were in broadcloth a little while ago. Nor do I think that they are being punished for the wrong which they did so much as they are for the wrong way in which they did it. They might have been worse men and have continued to be honored both in church and in society. I am not at all certain that most good people are really any better than these men are.

Most good people are entirely willing to live luxuriously

on the earnings of other people. Indeed, that is the way most good people get their luxuries. Gambling is not necessarily dealing in cards, or betting on the turn of the wheel. This much we are willing to admit today. Taking chances of any kind some people would say is gambling. But that is also beside the mark. The essence of gambling is the willingness to take other men's money without earning it, to get something for nothing. That, we are practically all of us willing to do. The favorite day dream of nice, respectable, good people who have very little money is getting a lot without earning it, and "doing good" with a portion of the sweat of other men's toil. As for those who have it in any considerable amount, and to whom we cater in all sorts of ways because they have it, almost without exception they got it by playing more or less cleverly some game in which they were able to exploit their fellows. Respectability, generally speaking, is only another name for successful parasitism. Criminality is playing the game violently or clumsily, so that you are caught breaking the rules. Even the breaking of the rules isn't so serious if you don't get caught at it. "Prisons," as the small boy said, "are for them as gets kotched."

One of the men who joined me in the "Christian Comrade" movement in San Francisco had been for years a traveling man. Although brought up in a devout home he got to drinking some and gambling. He was never extreme in respect to either, and never became disreputable. Once, in talking over this part of his experience, he told me graphically of an evening in a saloon when he had staked a good deal on the turn of the wheel, and how he prayed earnestly that God would prosper his fortune, vowing to make good use of his success if he won.

"I never prayed more earnestly or more sincerely in my life," he said.

Old John Newton, afterward a very noted divine, testified that he never enjoyed sweeter fellowship with God than he did on some of his early voyages when he was returning with the hatches of his ship full of naked, sick, half-starved and wholly miserable Africans whom he sold to the likewise pious planters at a splendid profit. His goodness was sincere enough, but it was purely personal, and had no consciousness of the moral values of economic considerations.

I cannot see that John Newton's blindness was any more dense in a moral way than that of respectable and religious people who can enjoy "touring Europe" or our own country, for that matter, with the hatches of civilization crowded to the death with a huddle of miserable toilers whose sweat is

the price of all our superior possessions and ways.

Nor can I see that my friends who are at San Quentin for misappropriating other people's money contrary to the rules of the game are really any worse in their stripes than they were when they sat at the banquet board with a lot of other respectable parasites and studied out legal ways of getting a larger share for themselves of what other men had produced.

"So you would like to be good?" said Jesus to a certain rich young man who had a good deal more of this world than he had ever earned, and wanted to find out some easy way of making sure of the next world. "And you tell me that you have lived an orderly, respectable life? What do you know about goodness, anyway, that you pass on the compliment so lightly to me? Nobody but God has ever yet got hold of what goodness really is. But if you want to make a decent beginning suppose you quit living on other people, get rid of all this truck that you don't really need and give it to those who do need it, strip yourself down to yourself and join us just as a man among men in our work of trying to build up a really human world."

Do you wonder that with all his ordinary decency and conventional religiousness the young man promptly turned down the proposition? Or do you wonder that all of us preachers and all the rest of the very respectable following of a man who was esteemed less than a convict in his day have been busy ever since he said this awkward thing in trying to explain it away?

The ordinary cant of goodness is bad enough. The conceit with which we sit in judgment on our fellows who have been a little franker in their wickedness than ourselves is worse yet. The cowardice which is back of a lot of our decency which makes our very virtues less attractive than the more daring or less coldly calculating ways of some who thereby fall into trouble is likewise to our discredit. Our contentment all along the line with half-way goodness, half-way truthfulness, half-way progress of every type is further condemnation for us. I confess that I have sinned with others both better and worse than myself at all these points, and my ministry has revealed to me very slowly indeed, and through much of varying, vacillating mood as I have witnessed in these articles how cheap a thing most of our clatter about goodness is. I see the shallowness of it all so self-convictingly now that I hate the whole condemnatory system by which we sit in judgment on sinners whose worst condemnation is that they are so very much like the rest of us even when they reform.

But the most pitiful part of it all to me is the blindness with which we continue to sit on the backs of our brothers while we whip them for falling down, and the appearance of sincerity with which we say our prayers at the same time that we are going through our weaker brother's pockets.

One of the members of my congregation here is a German, who speaks broken English. He is not a member of my church. He was brought up a Lutheran. His pastor took him to task for not attending his own church in another town. The man explained by trying to tell his social convictions, which are radical.

"Don't you know," said the minister, "that if you neglect the church and run after that sort of thing you will lose your soul and go to hell?"

"Well," said the man, with eyes full of great sorrowful compassion, "I'd be willing enough to lose my soul and go to hell if I could help in that way to save the poor people of this world from the hell in which so many of them are living today."

Convert that man! I'd be glad enough if I could convert the preachers themselves to that kind of religion. Nor will the goodness of the world ever be good for very much until it feels that way.

"The rich are willing to do anything for the poor except to get off their backs," said Tolstoi.

Good people will do almost anything nowadays for the bad except quit the profits of the social processes which make them bad.

Our criminal classes are not our dangerous classes. The I. W. W.'s, foreign labor, the agitators, the tramps and the hoboes themselves are not our dangerous classes. Even the "higher ups" whom we are trying vainly to reach in a punitive way are not the sources of social disturbance and unrest. If we could catch all the chief capitalists tomorrow and put them in jail it would be as vain as killing mosquitoes and leaving their breeding places intact. All our muck-raking zeal against individuals whether for individual or for social offenses is as futile as swabbing up floors with the faucets turned on. We shall have to keep on swabbing, of course, until we have sense enough to turn off the faucets. And the chief reason that we keep the faucets going is that we are all willing to take the risk of ruining or neighbors if we can get unearned benefits for ourselves.

It was an ancient Greek philosopher who, when he was asked by a patronizing king, "What can I do for you?" re-

sponded promptly, "Get out of my sun."

That is the first thing that good people need to do for bad people today. Go on with your piosities if you please. Think yourself as superior to others as you will. Stumble over your own virtues into a stupid content with a goodness which has not yet really begun to be good. BUT GET OFF THE BACKS OF THE POOR!

The piety of our day is still the piety of the parasite. The missionary is commonly as blind to it as the "heathen" whom the supporters of the missionary are rushing to exploit. The slum worker pays for his hymn books out of the rent that only vice itself can afford to pay. The evangelistic minister is helped in his evangelism by the very men who are doubling their dividends by halving the lives of his converts. The religious editor is dependent upon all kinds of irreligious humbug in an economic way. Even in such an earthly paradise as this sequestered nook the only chance for a man to live is to have stored up the honey of other men's toil, or to live upon those who have such a store. There is plenty of chance to be pious today. It is the hardest thing in the world to be simply just, to stop clinging to other men's backs and stand on your own feet.

I am a parasite myself, living on what other men produce. The little that I have in property is all "unearned increment," which society made and did not have the sense to keep. Had I devoted myself to getting more I need not have worked half as hard, and I might have been vastly more respectable, because I might have had thousands for every dollar which I have. Some, trying to get such thousands, have failed, and are unfortunates to be pitied now and suffer our charities. Some, more impatient in their methods, have been caught and are wearing the stripes. Some have gotten what it has taken the toil of thousands to produce, and when they come to church occasionally everybody is breathlessly hoping they will be good enough to give us a part of the spoil. Some of us have only dreamed of such successful taking toll on the highways of life from the fruits of others' labors. But our goodness never seems so good to us as when we are able to dress ourselves in fineries which we have taken off the backs of the poor.

Suppose Jesus asked us to strip down to our manhood today and begin to be just before we even tried to be good?

Who says that the men in stripes would be any more unwilling to work real social justice and righteousness than ourselves.

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